

GUERRILLA WAR IN “LITTLE DIXIE”: UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT ESCALATION IN MISSOURI DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

A Monograph

by

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ABSTRACT

GUERRILLA WAR IN “LITTLE DIXIE”: UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT ESCALATION IN MISSOURI DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR by Major David Tristan Holstead, 66 pages.

The state of Missouri never seceded from the United States, yet the state witnessed more violence and bloodshed than almost any other state in the Union. The violence in Missouri looked little like the larger war. It devolved from conventional operations for territorial control to criminality motivated by personal grievances. The conflict deteriorated quickly; in sixteen short months the war in Missouri was completely disconnected from the larger Confederate movement, leaving United States soldiers behind to impose law and order to pacify a tense populous. Tactically, these troops often failed, enforcing ill-conceived policies with ill-disciplined actions. Strategically, however, any threat of Missouri joining the rebellion had dissipated by late 1862. This study examines this escalation of violence in a region of Missouri known as “Little Dixie,” the agricultural nexus of the state and the area in which many believed to most resemble the south. These notions were false; these preconceived notions influenced the conduct of Union soldiers and contributed to the brutal conditions of the state. By understanding the social conditions in Little Dixie on the eve of war, the political strategy of both national and state leaders toward Missouri, and the military actions taken by both sides in 1861 and 1862, this conflux of events and their connection to the deteriorating conditions becomes evident. For students of irregular war, this study demonstrates the potential consequence of misalignment between military and political policy, the dangers inherent in holding preconceived bias about any indigenous population, and the understanding that well-intended actions will have unintended consequences. These dynamics can counter-intuitively cause an occupation force to become a source of instability in itself.

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INTRODUCTION

In no way does the enemy give us so much trouble, at so little expense to himself, as by the raids of rapidly moving small bodies of troops harassing and discouraging loyal residents, supplying them provisions, clothing, horses, and the like, surprising and capturing small detachments of our forces, and breaking our communications.

— President Abraham Lincoln to General William Rosecrans on 17 February 1863

On 10 May 1861, United States Army Captain Nathaniel Lyon led approximately 7,000 armed locally raised Unionist militia to an encampment outside of Saint Louis, coerced the surrender of the State Militia encamped there, and marched 669 “prisoners” back through the streets of Saint Louis. The image of the largely German-immigrant militia, also known as “Home Guards,” treating native-born Missourians as criminals instigated bystanders to insult the Unionists, shouting “damn the Dutch” and “hurrah for Jeff Davis” to the arresting troops. The confrontation quickly intensified until the agitated “Home Guards” fired multiple volleys into the crowd, killing twenty-eight civilians, including women and children. The “Camp Jackson Affair” aggravated mounting tensions over Missouri’s future within the splintered American landscape. In turn, Lyon’s actions detonated a surge of brutality that touched every Missourian over the next four years. In early 1861, however, most Missourians believed that a peaceful resolution to the sectional crisis was still attainable. However, by 1863, the civil war in Missouri resembled anarchy, as local and indiscriminate violence engulfed the state. These brutal conditions materialized from Missouri’s unique social, economic, and political dynamics prior to the war. First, Missouri experienced significant changes to its social fabric from 1840 to 1860, which in turn changed the state’s political environment and economic center from its southern roots toward a commercial hub for America’s westward expansion. Political and military leaders from both sides misinterpreted this dynamic, which widened the chasm in Missouri’s population after hostilities began. Second, misperceptions about the Missouri social, economic, and political landscape fed into ill-conceived strategies and incoherent tactical execution on both sides. Many

secessionists acted on the assumption that Missouri, as a slave state, would eventually secede. In turn, Confederate military success accomplished little toward this political end. Conversely, Union accomplished only limited military success, but President Abraham Lincoln's better political strategy allowed the Union to maintain control of the state. Last, the fight for Missouri included a small number of battles between Union and rebel conventional militias, significant occupation and garrisoning by Union forces, and finally, decentralized irregular warfare. Fueled by popular passion and Missouri's emergent character, the societal conditions, political approaches, and incongruent military actions in 1861 and 1862 created a labyrinth of terror across Missouri by the end of the war.¹

The hostilities that absorbed Missouri looked very little like the larger war; the confluence of political, military, and social dynamics in Missouri generated its *own* war, with its own character, incentives, and outcomes. This internal war isolated Missouri from the Confederacy and forced the United States to retain a substantial force in the state just to maintain order and enforce martial law. The "Little Dixie" region along the Missouri River, the agricultural breadbasket of the state and the purported center of secessionist sympathies, became the epicenter of violence and guerrilla warfare during the first year of the war. Armed engagements evolved in this locale over three overlapping phases. First, conventional military battles between inexperienced militias centered on control of the strategically vital Missouri River. Second, when Union forces occupied Missouri in 1861 and 1862, they maintained control of the river, which divided Missouri between secessionist strongholds in the south and heavy Union occupation in

¹Louis S. Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 104–110; Hans C. Adamson, *Rebellion in Missouri, 1861: Nathaniel Lyon and His Army of the West* (Philadelphia: Chilton, Book Division, 1961), 55–63; James Peckham, *Gen. Nathaniel Lyon, and Missouri in 1861. A Monograph of the Great Rebellion* (New York: America News Company, 1866), 149–57, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:13960/fk3707wx7c;view=1up;seq=9> (accessed 27 November 2013); *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1880), ser. 2, vol. 1, 107–10, 114. Hereafter *O.R.*

the north. Last, after Union forces evicted the conventional rebel militia out of Missouri in early 1862, the remaining rebels in Little Dixie clashed with the Unionists to create an environment where “home” was “no longer a safe asylum” for Missourians of either side.²

Terms

The nature of the violence that consumed Missouri in 1861 has an extensive lexicon, both by today’s standards and in its historical context. Defining types of combat aids in understanding the conflict, as military actions varied widely in Missouri during the Civil War. The term “guerrilla” first appeared in Western European lexis as Spanish citizens resisted Napoleon’s occupation of Spain in 1808. In this context, historian John Lawrence Tone defines *guerrilla* warfare as “the irregular war of civilians against the occupation forces of a foreign power or an unpopular regime.” British Army Colonel Charles Callwell used the term “small wars” to refer to an irregular tactic or force against a larger, more lethal conventional force. Within these parameters, Callwell summarizes guerrilla warfare much more despairingly – forces that, he states, “shun decisive action and their tactics almost of necessity bring about a protracted, toilsome war.” Prior to Callwell’s description, however, Francis Lieber had codified guerrilla warfare in a similarly negative light during the Civil War with the conduct of rebel forces in Missouri in mind. Lieber described guerillas as fighters detached from military organization, who “carry on petty war by raids, extortion, destruction, and massacre, and who cannot encumber themselves with many prisoners, and will therefore generally give no quarter.” This contrasts sharply with Lieber’s depiction of “partisans” in government-sponsored military organizations that historian Robert Mackey labels, “not unauthorized regulars, but regular units performing irregular roles.” This distinction is important; partisans were part of an organized army, whereas

²Elvira Ascenith Weir Scott Diary, in Silvana R. Siddali, *Missouri’s War: The Civil War in Documents* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), 129–31.

“guerrilla” actions denoted an element of criminality. Further, the term “bushwhacker” runs akin to Lieber’s “armed prowler,” or fighters who act on a self-serving basis alone. Thus, the spectrum of irregular or unconventional warfare, used interchangeably here, included criminal and defiant activities under deceitful pretenses, as well as irregular tactics executed by enrolled soldiers, such as severing railroads or conducting rear-area raids against a vulnerable military adversary.³

Regions in Missouri

Five distinct regions divided Missouri in 1860. St. Louis was the second largest city west of the Mississippi River, and along with the surrounding counties possessed the most political and economic influence in the state. The city, located at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, controlled commerce from north to south to New Orleans as well as commerce into the western frontier. By 1860, German and Irish immigrants populated St. Louis to support the manufacturing expansion in the city, and, therefore, gave the city a character not unlike northern cities like Chicago. The northern plains region consisted of mainly rolling hills and produced much of the state’s agricultural production, as fertile soils in the flood plains of the Missouri River and its various tributaries suited a wide variety of crops. The Little Dixie area fell within the northern plains region. From the Missouri River south to the Arkansas border, the sparsely populated Ozark Mountains created a natural barrier into Missouri and isolated the state from the rest of the south. Along Missouri’s western border, the Great Plains region served as the

³John L. Tone, “The Fatal Knot: Popular Resistance and Guerrilla Warfare in Navarre, 1808-1814” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1989), 4; Francis Lieber and Richard S. Hartigan, *Lieber’s Code and the Law of War* (Chicago: Precedent, 1983), 41; Robert R. Mackey, “The Uncivil War: Irregular Warfare in the Upper South, 1861-1865,” (PhD diss., Texas A&M University, 2000), 5; A. J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1998), 32–34; Charles Edward Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, 3rd ed. (London: Harrison and Sons, 1906), 31–32, http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/small_wars.htm, (accessed 29 November 2013); *O.R.*, ser. 3, 3:157.

gateway to the western frontier. By 1860, Kansas City and St. Joseph were developing into trade centers tied to the western territories. The Oregon and Santa Fe trails, originating in Missouri, enabled traders to buy cheap livestock in Missouri and deliver these goods to western military posts and settlements for considerable profit. Finally, the “boot heel” region in far southeastern Missouri adjacent to the Mississippi River contained swamps and barely inhabitable lands in 1860. However, iron and lead mining in this region supported the burgeoning industrial economy in St. Louis.⁴

THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Missouri entered the Union at the close of an angry contest on the subject of slavery. Her geographical position, the variety of the branches of industry to which her resources point, her past growth and future prospects, combine to demand that all her councils be taken in the spirit of sobriety and conciliation.

John B. Henderson, Missouri State Convention Delegate, March 21, 1861⁵

Introduction to the Missouri Environment

At the beginning of the Civil War, Missouri represented a society beginning to transition away from its agricultural foundations toward an industrial and commercial based economy. Yet, very few people, including Missourians, recognized this trend. Understandably, most Americans associated Missouri as the genesis of the pro-slavery faction in “Border War” conflict over the Kansas territory the decade prior. Many neighboring residents from Illinois, Iowa, and Kansas, perceived Missouri as a regressive frontier society with little regard to law and order.

Southerners, on the other hand, assumed that Missourians would ultimately choose secession over

⁴Perry McCandless, *A History of Missouri*, The Missouri Sesquicentennial ed., vol. 2 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), chap. 2; Arthur Winslow, *Geology and Mineral Products of Missouri* (St. Louis: Woodward and Tiernan, 1893), <https://archive.org/details/geologyminalpr00wins>, (accessed 28 February 2014).

⁵Missouri State Convention, *Journal and Proceedings of the Missouri State Convention, Held at Jefferson City and St. Louis, March 1861* (St. Louis: George Knapp, 1861), 50, <https://archive.org/stream/journalandproce00goog#page/n12/mode/2up>, (accessed 17 November 2013).

loyalty to the Union should any threat to the peculiar institution emerge. However, neither assumption reflected the true character of the state. With a marked increase in immigrants during the 1850s, the socio-demographic makeup of Missouri looked very little like other southern states. Even Little Dixie carried little resemblance to southern society. The lack of a planter class and relatively few slaves per capita suggests a western, not southern character for these counties. Economically, Missouri's primary driver remained agriculture, but Missouri's emergence as the "gateway" to western opportunity guided many Little Dixie residents in 1860. This, too, was lost on both southern strategic leaders and Union soldiers. Politically, this trend manifested in three elections in 1860 and 1861, where Missourians resoundingly voted for centrist candidates who represented compromise and loyalty to the Union first. Only in sparsely populated areas, like the Ozarks in southern Missouri, did secessionist candidates find success.⁶

The admission of Missouri and Maine as states in 1820 centered on the expansion of slavery, as the Missouri Compromise temporarily calmed the debate on expanding the practice into new territories and maintaining a legislative balance between Slave states and Free states. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act negated the Missouri Compromise and re-introduced Missouri to the forefront of the national debate, as Congress declared that the inhabitants of a territory had the right to determine the legality of slavery by popular vote, or "popular sovereignty." The Kansas Territory became the experimental laboratory for this policy. The experiment failed; it produced greater bitterness between the northern and southern societies and rationalized violence as an acceptable means of expression in the slavery debate. Here, waves of passionate abolitionists from the northeast descended into Kansas to drive the vote against slavery, only for pro-slavery Missourians to counter with parallel intentions. The violent outgrowth of these movements

⁶Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerilla Conflict in Missouri during the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 142–192; Tony R. Mullis, *Peacekeeping on the Plains: Army Operations in Bleeding Kansas* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), 35–57.

consisted of pro-slavery “bushwhackers” and anti-slavery “jayhawkers” who partook in uncivil and criminal acts, ranging from voter fraud to murder. This “Border War” not only foreshadowed the Missouri Civil War, but also confirmed preconceptions of a backward Missouri people to many northerners. Historian Michael Fellman suggests that, in reality, most Missourians were “good, solid evangelical farmers,” but the northern press painted Missourians with a distasteful image, and often referred to them as “puke.” If the northern militias that entered Missouri in 1861 held this preconceived notion, then the likelihood that these untrained and undisciplined novices could (or would) show restraint under fire in a confusing, ambiguous environment was questionable at best.⁷

Missouri Society in 1860

In reality, Missouri residents in 1860 reflected a mix of social viewpoints, ranging between traditional southern values and a frontier mentality guided by economic opportunity. The 1860 Census indicates that 13% of Missouri’s population immigrated from Germany or Ireland. Most of these immigrants settled in St. Louis, where they became a considerable political force in the state. Considering that 66% of all foreign-born persons residing in slave states lived in Missouri, the state looked far different from the rest of the south. The Germans collectively held passionate anti-slavery views, which further added to this societal and economic disconnection. Second, the combination of Missouri’s location along major rivers and promising industrial expansion had begun to create a society linked to economic opportunity in the west and north. While economic opportunity existed in Missouri from its first settlers a half century before, slavery was a fundamental part of this attitude to this point. Missouri’s original settlers primarily migrated from Border States like Virginia and Kentucky, and hence carried different

⁷Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy toward Southern Civilians, 1861-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 42–45; Fellman, *Inside War*, 15–17.

values than the residents from the Deep South that drove southern sectionalism. This propelled the emergence of a mixed commercial economy driven by small, individual farms and diversified crop production rather than the cotton, cane, or rice monocultures of the Deep South. Last, the established families in Little Dixie were now second generation Missourians and had developed a much different character than most of their Southern neighbors. Missouri attracted individuals with an independent disposition and collectively carried a Jacksonian spirit during the state's first forty years. As such, they distrusted elitism, revered the common white man, and believed wholeheartedly in Manifest Destiny. However, two regions – St. Louis and Little Dixie – developed different political and social views, which added to the distinct Missouri environment.⁸

While St. Louis and Little Dixie differed from each other and from the rest of the state socially and politically, these two areas held the most political influence over Missouri throughout its short history. St. Louis increasingly resembled northern cities, while Little Dixie served as the state's agricultural hub and resembled upper southern states like Tennessee and North Carolina. Unlike Missouri as a whole, Little Dixie held a strong Whig heritage. This heritage suggests that, like other southern Whigs, Little Dixie residents fixated on commercial growth and valued a strong, protectionist national economic system. While Little Dixie had no formal boundaries, eleven counties in eastern and central Missouri shared similar settlement patterns, comparable economies, and a relatively large slave population. Little Dixie's original settlers emigrated from slave states in the 1820s and 1830s, primarily from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. These settlers arrived in Missouri with their slaves and "considerable money" for land, seeds, and more slaves. A market-based economy developed here with hemp and tobacco as

⁸Sceva Bright Laughlin, "Missouri Politics During the Civil War, Second Article," *Missouri Historical Review* 23, no. 4 (July 1929): 405–407, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm> (accessed 14 November 2013); United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC: Department of the Interior, United States Census Bureau, 1864), 274–316, <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html> (accessed 12 November 2013).

the primary economic staples. Further, these eleven counties held the highest percentages of slaves in the state. Author Robert M. Crisler offered a similar analysis with a comparable conclusion, although he obtained his evidence from political sentiment and local self-identity *after* the Civil War. Thus, these eleven counties shared common characteristics, a shared reputation as pro-southern sympathizers, and after the Civil War, a shared moniker.⁹

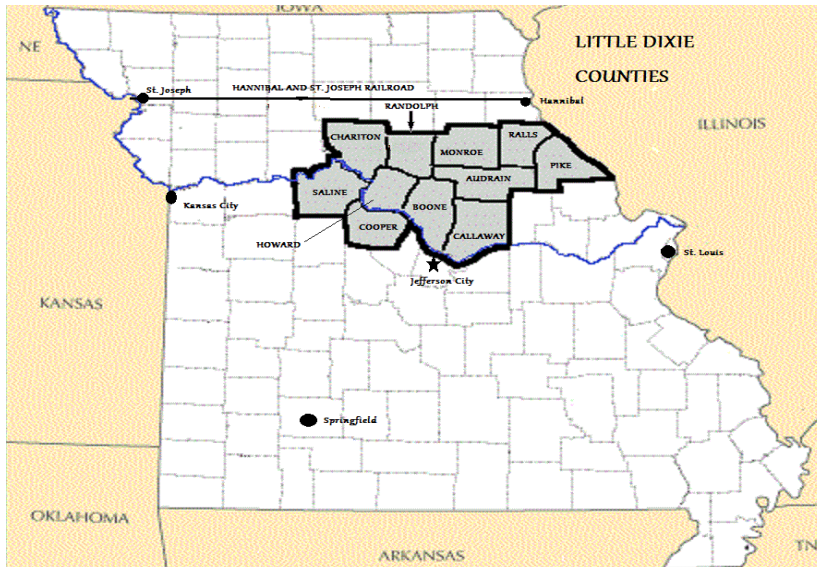


Figure 1. Little Dixie Counties

Source: Created By Author. Blank Map; <http://www.nationalatlas.gov> (accessed 5 March 2014).

⁹William O. Lynch, "The Influence of Population Movements on Missouri Before 1861," *Missouri Historical Review* 16, no. 4 (July 1922): 506–07; Robert M. Crisler, "Missouri's 'Little Dixie,'" *Missouri Historical Review* 42, no. 2 (January 1948): 130–39, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/> (accessed 12 November 2013); Jack Blanton, "The Truth About Little Dixie," *Monroe County Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2007), <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~momchs2/onlinearchive/littledixie.html> (accessed 12 November 2013); R. Douglas Hurt, "Planters and Slavery in Little Dixie," *Missouri Historical Review* 88, no. 2 (July 1994): 398–402, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/> (accessed 14 November 2013); Floyd Shoemaker, "Missouri - Heir of Southern Tradition and Individuality," *Missouri Historical Review* 37, no. 4 (July 1942): 435–46, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/> (accessed 12 November 2013).

Table 1. Little Dixie Population

County	White	Slaves	Aggregate	Slave Percentage
Audrain	6,909	1,166	8,075	14.4%
Boone	14,399	5,034	19,486	25.8%
Callaway	12,895	4,523	17,449	25.9%
Chariton	9,672	2,839	12,562	22.6%
Cooper	13,528	3,800	17,356	21.9%
Howard	9,986	5,886	15,946	36.9%
Monroe	11,722	3,021	14,785	20.4%
Pike	14,302	4,055	18,417	22.0%
Ralls	6,788	1,791	8,502	21.1%
Randolph	8,777	2,619	11,407	23.0%
Saline	9,800	4,876	14,699	33.2%
Total	118,778	39,610	158,684	25.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 286–87.
<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html> (accessed 12 November 2013).

The Missouri Economy in 1860

Despite its history, reputation, and demographic background, many Missourians recognized that their future prosperity existed not in the south, but in the north and the west. In 1860, Missouri controlled the avenues to the western frontier by water, wagon, and rail. St. Louis influenced commerce far into the Great Plains interior, which in turn brought significant commercial opportunity to Missouri. The two major land routes west, the Santa Fe and Oregon trails, originated in Missouri. Westward expansion following the Mexican-American War increased traffic and trade on these routes steadily in the 1840's and 1850's. More significantly, railroad expansion in the 1850s increased the potential for commerce. Bridge crossings on the Mississippi River from Hannibal and St. Louis opened in 1856 and 1858, respectively, linking Missouri to growing manufacturing cities like Chicago and Cincinnati. Further, the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad opened in 1856 and spanned the state, which made it a competitive candidate for a possible eastern link for a transcontinental railroad. These prospects generated excitement and made railroad expansion a central topic in the 1860 elections. With railroad expansion, Missouri's central location provided the link between the thriving Pacific market and

manufacturing centers in the northeast. Standing on this threshold of opportunity, Missouri merchants understood that the capital needed for this expansion was located in the northeast. If Missouri seceded, these opportunities disappeared. Thus, St. Louis and Little Dixie residents, who had the most to gain from this growth, knew that secession meant economic suicide.¹⁰

Despite the fervor over railroad expansion and the economic opportunity it generated, agriculture still dominated the state economy in 1860. Both Union and Confederate governments stood to benefit from Missouri's food, mineral, and manufacturing outputs. Few southern states rivaled Missouri in wool, flax, wheat, hemp, rye, and corn production, as southern planters chose instead to continue cultivating cotton. Profiting from six decades of the "King Cotton" monopoly drove southern planters to shun crop diversification even during the war. Missouri produced several goods that later became shortages for the Confederacy, such as corn, horses, livestock, and certain grains. Further, the mining industry in southeastern Missouri produced more iron, zinc, and lead than any other southern state. The St. Louis and Iron Mountain railroad, completed just prior to the Civil War, created the means to export these minerals through St. Louis to external markets. In St. Louis, manufacturing capabilities still comparatively lagged behind eastern counterparts, but population growth and railroad construction accelerated progress in the 1850s. As such, Missouri's primary manufacturing exports included boots, shoes, clothing, saddlery, and wagons – all of which could supplement a war effort in 1860. As such, the Union Army located its primary shipbuilding center in St. Louis during the war, as its proximity to iron deposits and location on the Missouri River made the city a prime location for this effort. Thus,

¹⁰Hon. Thomas Allen, "The Railroad Question: On the Bill Proposing a Loan of the Credit of the State to Expedite the Construction of the Pacific Railroad, and of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad" (Speech presented at the Senate of Missouri, Jefferson City, Missouri, 11 February 1851); Josiah Gregg, *The Commerce of the Prairies*, ed. Milo Milton Quaife (Chicago: R.R. Donnelly and Sons, 1926); William E. Parrish, *A History of Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), chap. 1; Doris Wallace, "The Political Campaign of 1860 in Missouri," *Missouri Historical Review* 70, no. 2 (January 1976): 172.

Missouri products and resources supplemented the Union war effort, whereas shortages for these same resources created critical disadvantages for Confederate soldiers through 1865.¹¹

While Little Dixie produced more hemp and tobacco than the rest of the trans-Mississippi west combined, Little Dixie farmers still enjoyed an agricultural diversity unlike most other southern states. As historian R. Douglas Hurt points out, many frontier farmers did not have the capacity for excess harvest. In Little Dixie, however, the Missouri River made other markets accessible. With this added incentive to diversify crops and produce surpluses, towns on the Missouri River tied to commercial transport emerged. Despite this commercial agricultural economy, Little Dixie lacked a planter class, as only 3% of Little Dixie's slaveholders owned twenty or more slaves. This contrasts with plantation economies, where up to 40% of slave-owners qualified as planters and the mass production of commercial crops, like cotton or sugar, dominated the local markets. Further, these crops required considerable slave labor, whereas hemp and tobacco harvests required far less work. Hence, Little Dixie farmers produced profitable harvests with far fewer slaves. Because of this, Hurt argues, small farmers in Missouri could diversify their crops and still profit from commercial trade. In the Deep South, slave labor only benefitted planters, whereas in Little Dixie, the open economy meant greater economic opportunity across the social spectrum. Hurt further states that "profit, not class consciousness" governed Little Dixie planters. In a larger context, Missouri not only contained far fewer slaves per capita than any other slave state, but far fewer slaves per slave owner, even in its most

¹¹Alvin M. Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1991), 12; Robert L. Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1863-1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 9; United States Census Bureau, *Agriculture of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC: Department of the Interior, 1864), <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html> (accessed 12 November 2013); *O.R.*, ser. 1, 25: pt. 2:749; Thomas A. Belser, "Military Operations in Missouri and Arkansas, 1861-1865," PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1958, 14-17; Stanley Lebergott, "Why the South Lost: Commercial Purpose in the Confederacy, 1861-1865," *The Journal of American History* 70, no. 1 (1983): 58-74; Parrish, *A History of Missouri*, 205-223; Stuart F. Voss, "Town Growth in Central Missouri, Part III.," *Missouri Historical Review* 64, no. 3 (April 1970): 322-50.

agricultural district. This suggests that perhaps “Little Dixie” is a misnomer, and that Missouri had much less in common with the southern United States than most realized in 1860.¹²

Missouri Politics in 1860

Three elections in 1860 and 1861 enhance this picture of Missouri’s changing economic and demographic landscape. Nationally, political platforms experienced a significant transition in the 1850s, as both major political parties split over issues related to slavery. The 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act killed the Whig party by finalizing a split between free-soil advocates (later the Republican Party) and southern Whigs who created the “Constitutional Union” Party. The Democratic Party divided in 1860 between southern States’ Rights activists, who wanted to guarantee protection for slavery, and northern Democrats who feared that such a stance would guarantee the loss of critical northern votes. Splitting the familiar two-party system expanded choices during the 1860 elections, and Missouri voters entertained the broad political spectrum with a wide variety of local, state, and national candidates. The expansion from two to four political tickets provided greater specificity to the candidates’ political platforms. As a result, the 1860 elections offer a useful snapshot of Missourians’ sentiments on the eve of war.

Elections for state office occurred in August, two months before the national elections. The candidates for state government positions generally aligned with the four new national political platforms, with the notable exception of eventual gubernatorial winner Claiborne Jackson. Jackson, a prominent Missouri Democrat, endorsed Stephen Douglas for President before southern Democrats formally split from the party in June. As the face of the popular sovereignty platform and with his commitment to railroad expansion, Douglas remained popular

¹²Hurt, “Planters and Slavery in Little Dixie”; McCandless, *A History of Missouri*, 2:41–50; U.S. Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 274–303; Kerby, *Kirby Smith’s Confederacy*, 9–14; Parrish, *A History of Missouri*, 5–8; Daniel W. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 810–17.

among Missouri Democrats. As such, Jackson campaigned on a Douglas platform, despite his firm secessionist views. In the gubernatorial election, the Republican candidate, James B. Gardenhire, received no support in the state outside of St. Louis. More surprisingly, however, Hancock Jackson, running on the pro-southern States' Rights ballot, garnered remarkably poor results for running in a slave state. Statewide, Hancock Jackson received only 7.1 % of the vote, and in Little Dixie, he ran a distant third in all eleven counties. Constitutional Unionist candidate Sample Orr won eight out of the eleven counties in Little Dixie. These former southern Whigs preferred to maintain the status quo on slavery but also preferred a strong, protectionist economic structure, though measures like nationally controlled banks and supporting high protective tariffs to promote the domestic economy. Orr, a Tennessee-born judge residing in southern Missouri, became the surprise Constitutional Union nominee after challenging Claiborne Jackson to a debate on secession during one of Jackson's early stump speeches in Springfield. Despite relative anonymity against a political heavyweight, Sample Orr's quick wit and simple demeanor increased his statewide popularity on the eve of the election. He came within 8,000 votes of winning on an anti-secession agenda, losing to Claiborne Jackson 47% to 42% statewide, while in Little Dixie, he beat Jackson by 394 votes.¹³

In the national election two months later, Missourians again voted for national unity in convincing fashion. Stephen Douglas carried Missouri, his only state, by a scant 533 votes over Constitutional Unionist candidate John Bell. John C. Breckenridge, the pro-slavery States Rights candidate, carried only 18.2 % of the vote, although this was a considerably better showing than for Hancock Jackson in the gubernatorial race. In Little Dixie, however, the election again illustrated their Whig heritage; Bell carried eight counties and Breckenridge finished third in all

¹³Michael J. Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1776-1860: The Official Results by County and State* (McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2003), 144–146; Laughlin, "Missouri Politics During the Civil War, Second Article."

but one Little Dixie county. Thus, in two elections, almost 89% of the votes cast in the Little Dixie region voted for centrist, compromising candidates, which demonstrated a remarkably different sentiment than the rest of the country. If Little Dixie most resembled the south in Missouri, voting patterns in both elections support the contention that Missouri political sentiment outside of either faction instigating the secession crisis.¹⁴

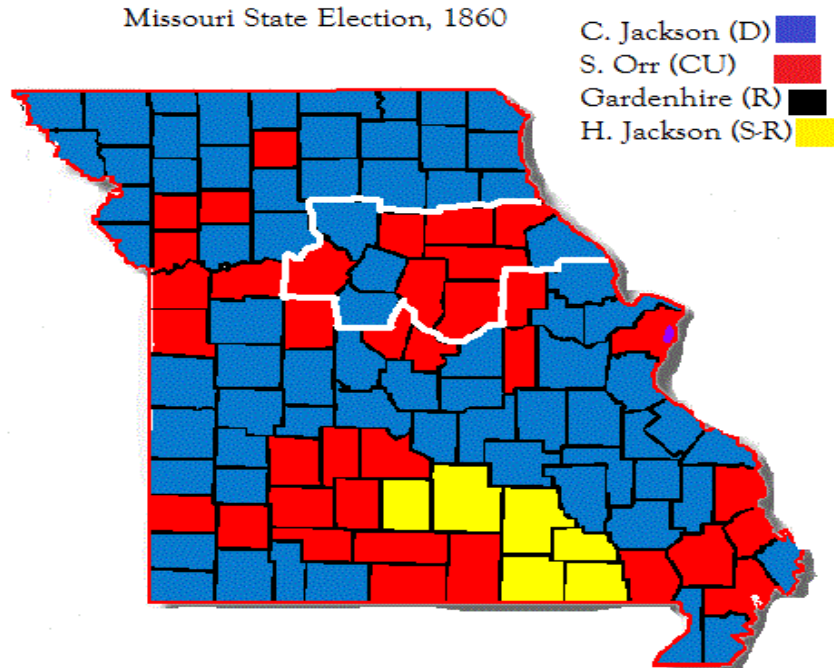
Table 2. 1860 Gubernatorial Election Results (Little Dixie Counties)

County	C. Jackson (D)	S. Orr (CU)	H. Jackson (S-D)	J. Gardenhire (R)
Audrain	615 (46.1%)	671 (50.3%)	47 (3.5%)	0 (0%)
Boone	1006 (40.1%)	1522(57.3%)	68 (2.6%)	0 (0%)
Callaway	1080 (43.3%)	1321(52.9%)	94 (3.8%)	1 (0.4%)
Chariton	639 (48.4%)	548 (41.5%)	124 (9.4%)	8 (0.1%)
Cooper	1076 (49.7%)	1029 (47.5%)	54 (2.5%)	7 (0.3%)
Howard	1099 (58.7%)	743 (39.7%)	28 (1.5%)	1 (0.1%)
Monroe	998 (45.9%)	1059 (48.7%)	117 (5.4%)	1 (0.1%)
Pike	1548 (54.8%)	1388 (46.4%)	50 (1.7%)	3 (0.3%)
Ralls	616 (48.4%)	647 (50.8%)	9 (0.7%)	1 (0.1%)
Randolph	808 (44.4%)	852 (45.7%)	183 (9.8%)	0 (0%)
Saline	933 (47.7%)	1002 (51.3%)	19 (1.0%)	0 (0%)
Total	10,418 (47.3%)	10,812 (49.1%)	793 (3.6%)	22 (0.01%)

Source: Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1776-1860:144–146*.

¹⁴Michael J. Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1776-1860: The Official Results by County and State* (McFarland & Company, 2003), 144–146; Sceva Bright Laughlin, “Missouri Politics During the Civil War,” *Missouri Historical Review* 23, no. 3 (April 1929): 172–73, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/> (accessed 14 November 2013); Laughlin, “Missouri Politics During the Civil War, Second Article,” 424–26; B. B. Lightfoot, “Nobody’s Nominee: Sample Orr and the Election of 1860,” *Missouri Historical Review* 60, no. 2 (January 1966): 127–48; “Missouri Republican,” *Daily Missouri Republican* (St. Louis), 10 January 1861, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/dmr> (accessed 23 November 2013); Michael J. Dubin, *United States Presidential Elections, 1788-1860: The Official Results by County and State* (McFarland & Company, 2002), 174–75.

Figure 2. 1860 Gubernatorial Election Map (Statewide)



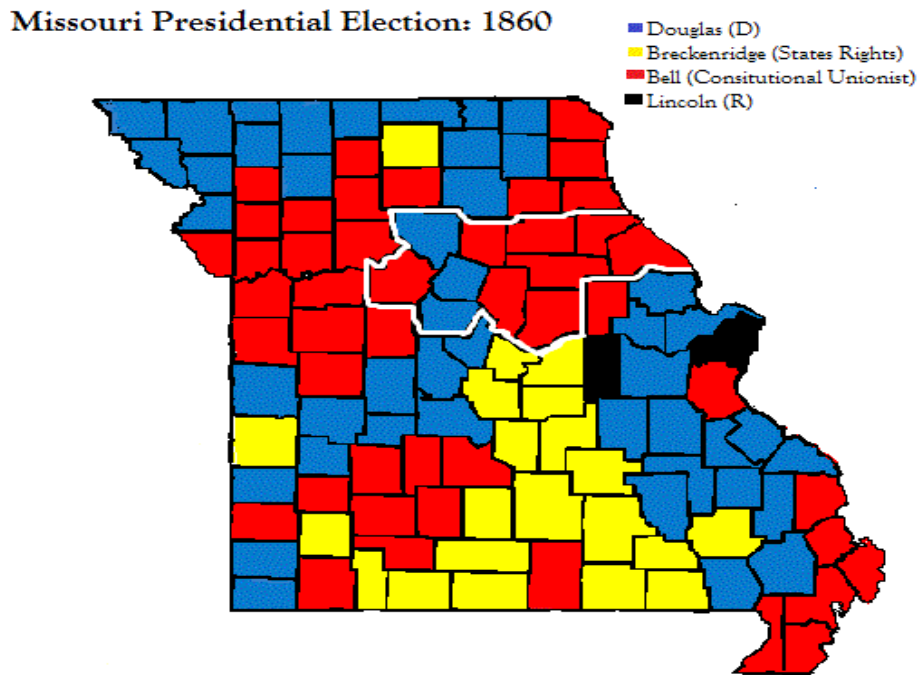
SOURCE: Dubin, United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1776-1860.

Table 3. 1860 Presidential Election Results (Little Dixie Counties)

County	S. Douglas (D)	J. Bell (CU)	J. Breckenridge (S-D)	A. Lincoln (R)
Audrain	289 (26.9%)	580 (52.9%)	206 (19.1%)	1 (0.1%)
Boone	578 (19.8%)	1671 (57.4%)	652 (22.4%)	12 (0.4%)
Callaway	839 (31.9%)	1306 (49.6%)	472 (17.9%)	15 (0.6%)
Chariton	692 (43.4%)	608 (38.1%)	295 (18.5%)	1 (0.1%)
Cooper	988 (44.1%)	952 (42.5%)	281 (12.5%)	20 (0.9%)
Howard	939 (44.6%)	920 (43.7%)	247 (11.7%)	1 (0.05%)
Monroe	680 (31.2%)	1086 (49.8%)	408 (18.7%)	8 (0.4%)
Pike	1117 (39.2%)	1300 (45.6%)	420 (14.7%)	15 (0.5%)
Ralls	391 (34.7%)	585 (52.0%)	149 (13.2%)	1 (0.1%)
Randolph	360 (21.2%)	821 (48.3%)	520 (30.6%)	0 (0%)
Saline	563 (28.7%)	1035 (52.7%)	366 (18.6%)	0 (0%)
Total	7,346 (32.9%)	10,864 (48.7%)	4,016 (18.0%)	74 (0.1%)

Source: Dubin, United States Presidential Elections 1788-1860.

Figure 3. 1860 Presidential Election Map



SOURCE: Dubin, United States Presidential Elections 1788-1860.

On 10 January 1861, after Abraham Lincoln's election victory, Governor Jackson requested that the recently elected State General Assembly called an election of delegates for a state convention to determine "the ultimate action of the state" regarding secession. That same day, the largest and most influential newspaper in the state, the *Daily Missouri (St. Louis) Republican*, printed an editorial highlighting the economic irresponsibility of secession by citing Missouri's connection to eastern markets. Regardless, secession-minded political leaders like Governor Jackson confidently held that the Missouri populace reflected southern interests. Casting votes for the third time in six months, Missourians selected delegates from three platforms dissimilar to the four national tickets. Among these, two Unionist positions emerged.

“Unconditional Unionists” believed that the state should not secede under any circumstances. With representatives from the Republican, Constitutional Unionist and National Democratic parties, these delegates placed primacy on Missouri’s embryonic economic system. Conditional Unionists held a wide variety of viewpoints, but all believed in the sovereignty of Missouri first. Most of these delegates advocated a tipping point of some sort, where some level of coercion by the Federal government would trigger the state government to reconsider secession. Secessionists aligned with southern interests, placed primacy on the protection and preservation of the slavery institution, and generally favored immediate secession. Missouri’s electorate spoke clearly, and elected no outright secessionists to the convention, even with the fervor over Lincoln’s election and perceived threat to the slavery institution.¹⁵

The convention began in St. Louis on 28 February. Delegates considered motions on the state’s relationship to the federal government, its relationship with the seceding southern states, and possible responses to coercive federal action against the state. Among the delegates included several future Confederate leaders, including former Democratic governor Sterling Price, who served as Convention President later commanded the rebel Missouri militia. However, considering the tense political landscape, the convention reflected very little strife. Two important outcomes emerged from this convention. First, delegates voted 89 to 1 that “no adequate cause” existed “to impel Missouri to dissolve her connection with the Federal Union.” Second, that if federal military coercion should occur, Missouri would “withhold and stay the arm of military power and on no pretense whatever bring upon the nation the horrors of civil war.” While the degree of loyalty to the United States varied among delegates, most favored amity

¹⁵ Editorial, *Daily Missouri Republican*, 10 January 1861, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/ref/collection/dmr/id/39> (accessed 13 November 2013); William E. Parrish, *Turbulent Partnership: Missouri and the Union, 1861-1865* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1963), 8–13.

among all states and saw Missouri as a potential arbitrator in the national dispute.¹⁶

Cumulatively, these elections demonstrate three characteristics of the Missouri electorate in 1860. First, Missourians clearly saw secession as a last resort. Democratic support for pro-southern candidates resided in only Missouri's southern Ozark and western plains counties. The former's sparse population held little influence on the state political landscape, while the western counties carried strong pro-southern sentiments as a holdover from the Kansas-Missouri Border War (1854-1861). Second, Little Dixie's strong Whig heritage reflected considerable statewide political influence. Although rural residents in the Ozarks and plains identified with Jacksonian Democratic principles, Constitutional Unionist candidates performed remarkably well with far less established candidates. This political division explains a fundamental difference between areas that favored secessionist candidates and areas tied directly to the national economy. In 1860, this difference showed through all three elections. Last, many Missourians believed that Stephen Douglas, although a Democrat, best represented economic freedom through his advocacy of building a transcontinental railroad through Missouri. In short, northern economic opportunity carried greater value to most Missourians than southern cultural heritage. The principal concerns for these citizens centered on free market capitalism; preserving and protecting slavery was necessary only to this end. The resolutions passed at the state convention regarding secession support this contention clearly.¹⁷

¹⁶*Journal of the Senate of Missouri at the First Session of the Twenty First General Assembly* (Jefferson City: W.G. Cheney, 1861), 58, Missouri House and Senate Journals, 1820-1899, Missouri State Archives, <http://cdm.sos.mo.gov/u/?senatej,10489> (accessed 30 November 2013); Parrish, *A History of Missouri*, 6; *Daily Missouri Republican*, 14 April 1861, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/dmr> (accessed 23 November 2013); Christopher Phillips, "Calculated Confederate: Claiborne Fox Jackson and the Strategy for Secession in Missouri," *Missouri Historical Review* 94, no. 4 (July 2000): 399; *Journal and Proceedings, 1861*, 5-6.

¹⁷Laughlin, "Missouri Politics During the Civil War"; *Journal and Proceedings, 1861*, 13-26; Charles Grier Sellers, Jr., "Who Were the Southern Whigs?," *The American Historical Review* 59, no. 2 (January 1954): 335-46, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1843625> (accessed 9

NATIONAL POLITICAL AND MILITARY STRATEGY

The seeds for disunion had existed in the United States for two generations prior to 1860. Abraham Lincoln's election that year severed the bonds of political union in the minds of many southerners. Following South Carolina's lead, the plantation-based Deep South states declared that state governments held the legal right to secede peacefully from the United States. The impetus for this rebellion centered on the protection of slavery. Many in the Deep South viewed the Republican Party in concert with its militant abolitionist wing, and, therefore, as a direct threat to their racially stratified society. Secession, according to these southerners, sanctioned the establishment of a new government in a near-mirror image of their perceived antagonist, the United States. However, states like Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri, whose economies depended far less on slave labor, held onto hopes for a peaceful solution. On 11 April, however, the bombardment of the Federal garrison at Fort Sumter crushed these hopes. Lincoln responded by calling on states to raise volunteers to quell the rebellion, which southerners interpreted as armed coercion against their perceived "right" to secede. This turn of events pushed Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee formally into the Confederacy. However, Missouri and the Border States carefully measured the practical benefits of remaining in the United States against secession. Under these circumstances, Governor Jackson began his campaign to push Missouri toward secession. However, he and Jefferson Davis forged vastly divergent outlooks on casting Missouri's future relationship with her sister southern states.

For the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis's political and military strategy never aligned with Missouri's political and social realities. As such, he inadvertently contributed to Missouri's failed secession movement. Politically, his rhetoric reflected an expectation that Missourians would

February 2014); Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1776-1860*: 140–46. Only Pike, Howard, and Chariton Counties consistently voted for Democrat candidates. However, in the 1848 and 1852 gubernatorial elections, less than four percentage points separated Whig and Democrat candidates in eight of the eleven Little Dixie counties.

eventually favor secession. In the war's critical opening months, Jackson's request for Confederate support met lukewarm reception in the Confederate capitol in Richmond. Governor Jackson understood that for him to secure Missouri for the Confederacy, he needed immediate outside fiscal and military support. Davis resisted providing substantial aid, only twice offering tangible assistance to Jackson's government. From 28 July to 14 August, he authorized Confederate forces under Brigadier General Ben McCullough to assist Missouri rebels, and later he approved ten million dollars "now in the treasury or which may hereafter be paid into the treasury" for state defense. Deposed from the governorship by Union forces in June 1861, Jackson decreed secession through his government-in-exile in late fall, 1861. Only then did Davis overtly offer support to the Missouri rebellion.¹⁸

Despite this nominal acceptance into the Confederacy, Davis never fulfilled his commitment to the state. First, Davis denied military support to the Missouri rebellion in the opening months of the war. In June, with control of the state capitol still in contention, Lieutenant Governor Thomas C. Reynolds travelled to Richmond to confer with Davis. Reynolds requested that the Confederate government "send with me a body of C. S. troops sufficient to prevent a failure at the start" and, further "to serve as a nucleus around which the Missourians may gather to form a

¹⁸Joseph G. Dawson, "Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy's 'Offensive-Defensive Strategy in the Civil War,'" *The Journal of Military History* 73, no. 2 (2009): 591–607; Edward H. Hagerman, *The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare: Ideas, Organization, and Field Command* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 6–16; William C. Davis, *Jefferson Davis: The Man and His Hour* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 372; Michael A. Bonura, *Under the Shadow of Napoleon: French Influence on the American Way of Warfare from the War of 1812 to the Outbreak of WWII* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); "Jefferson Davis to W.M. Brooks," 13 March 1862, in Dunbar Rowland, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist, His Letters, Papers, and Speeches.*, vol. 5 (Jackson, MS: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1923), 216–17, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015012910801;view=1up;seq=7> (accessed 27 November 2013); Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 97; Arthur Roy Kirkpatrick, "The Admission of Missouri to the Confederacy," *Missouri Historical Review* 55, no. 4 (July 1961): 380–81, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/ref/collection/mhr/id/36262> (accessed 11 October 2013).

home force to protect their menaced liberties.” Davis refused, choosing instead to conserve resources east of the Mississippi River. Second, Davis rarely authorized Confederate soldiers in Missouri, even after accepting their exiled government. Reynolds, who became governor-in-exile following Jackson’s death in 1862, criticized the Davis government in 1863 for its neglect of the Trans-Mississippi west. He argued that the Davis administration that Davis had turned the Trans-Mississippi Department into a “penal department” to shelve politically important commanders who possessed marginal military ability. Last, for Davis, immediate military necessity in the east carried greater urgency and importance than any political objectives in Missouri. This fit Davis’s “offensive-defensive” strategy, in which he intended to defend the entire Confederate expanse, regaining any lost territory by quick offensive counterstrokes. Thus, he intended to “carry war” to the “enemy’s country” when the opportune arose. This strategy apparently did not apply to Missouri, which could meet either the “Confederate expanse” or “enemy country” criteria, depending on one’s perspective. This perceived indifference to the Missouri cause in the eyes of most secessionists caused them to disconnect from the Confederate cause in the later years of the war. Instead, they channeled their contempt locally toward occupying militias from neighboring states and local Unionist citizens.¹⁹

In contrast to Davis’s indifference, Lincoln’s prioritized Missouri and the other Border States by understanding the political fabric of the state, establishing conditions for military success, and by putting Missouri in the context of a much larger picture. As a former Whig from Illinois, Lincoln understood Midwestern politics much better than Davis did. He saw the Border States as a political objective, due to their strategic location, abundant resources, and political capital. Thus, he aligned appropriate military force to ensure their position remained within the United

¹⁹Dawson, “Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy’s ‘Offensive-Defensive Strategy in the Civil War,’” 598–601; Richard E. Beringer, *Why the South Lost the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, chap. 1; Kerby, *Kirby Smith’s Confederacy*, 431–432; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 53: 692–94.

States. Fearing that he would “lose the whole game” if Missouri and Kentucky seceded, Lincoln balanced the tenuous situation in Missouri by avoiding policies that could alienate the populace and by providing military support to quell any potential insurrection. For example, when John C. Frémont, a fellow Republican, declared martial law in Missouri in August 1861, he threatened to free all slaves confiscated from known rebels in an attempt to stem the growing insurgent threat in northern Missouri. Lincoln, however, understood the potential volatility that such actions could create, in a state that never formally rebelled no less. He also could not afford to alienate other Border State politicians over this contentious issue. The military gains from Fremont’s decree did not justify the political risk. Thus, he carefully circumvented the emancipation issue and ordered Frémont to rebuke the order. Conversely, Lincoln also advised Captain Lyon, at the time commanding the Federal arsenal in St. Louis that “the authority of the United States is paramount, and whenever it is apparent that a movement, whether by color of State authority or not, is hostile, you will not hesitate to put it down.” These examples show Lincoln’s remarkable flexibility regarding Missouri politics: he placated to the “southern” sentiments of the state populace while also creating conditions for military advantage. Finally, he saw Missouri in the context of a much larger strategy. Unlike Davis, who treated the Mississippi River as a military obstacle and Missouri as a military liability, Lincoln treated these as military and political *objectives*. Further, Lincoln saw Missouri’s geographic position dominating the three most critical waterways in the US – the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio rivers – in terms of political advantage, which helped inform his decision to allocate considerable resources to keeping Missouri in the Union throughout the war.²⁰

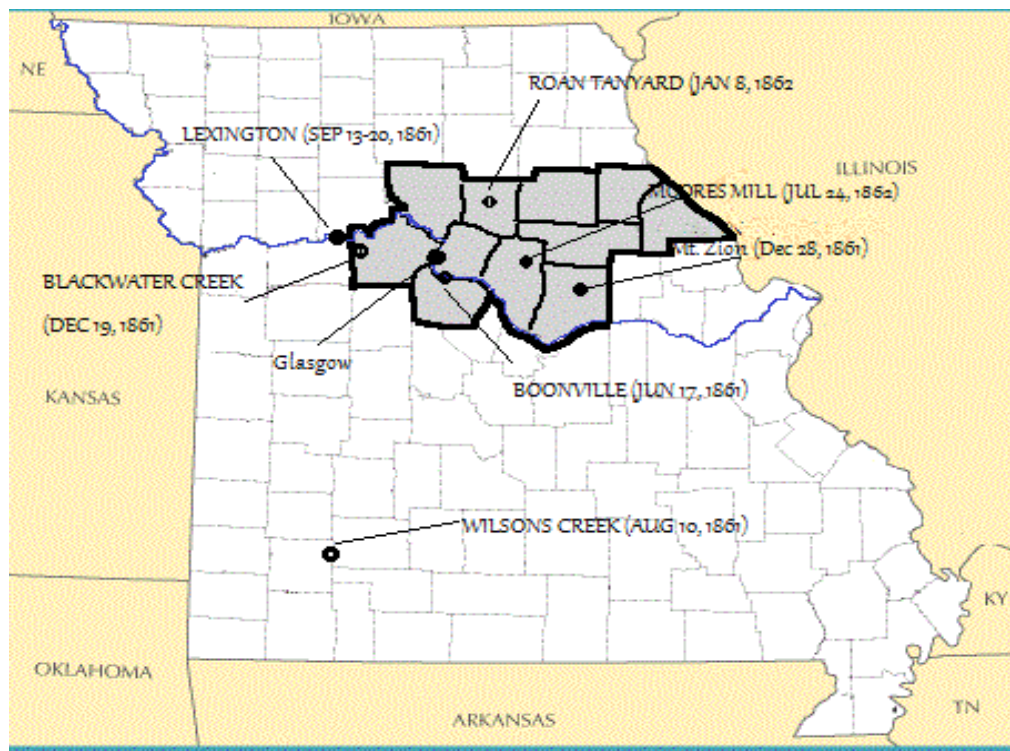
²⁰For detailed analysis of Lincoln’s policy toward the Border States, see William C. Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States: Preserving the Union* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011); Hattaway, *How the North Won*, 3; Thomas Lowndes Snead, *The Fight For Missouri from the Election of Lincoln to the Death of Lyon* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1886), 191–192; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 469.

THE CIVIL WAR IN “LITTLE DIXIE”

When hostilities began in May 1861, the fight for Missouri largely balanced between two types of military action: conventional operations between opposing militias and sporadic rebel guerrilla actions against the Union occupation. Over the next fifteen months, the conflict devolved into a vengeful and criminal mess. This evolution occurred over three overlapping phases. First, conventional fighting between pro-Confederate state militia forces and an assortment of Union forces transpired in the opening months of the war. These forces fought primarily along the Missouri River and in southwestern Missouri close to the Arkansas border. Second, in November, the conflict settled into irregular patterns of skirmishes and engagements between Confederate recruiting expeditions and Union counter-guerrilla patrols. During this phase, although Union forces occupied the entire state, most action centered on the Missouri River, which split the rebels between the conventional Missouri State Guard (MSG) in the south and independent guerrilla forces “trapped” in the north. Finally, partisan warfare against vulnerable military targets intensified in 1862 into a guerrilla war, characterized by an escalatory spiral of reprisals and retribution among the Missouri populace. This third phase, from March to September 1862, eventually deteriorated into what historian Michael Fellman called “a maelstrom that surpassed understanding.” Here, United States retained firm administrative control over the state, but the struggle among the Missouri citizens had become an ugly cycle of violence and atrocities aimed at each other. The Civil War in Missouri had transformed into a life of its own.²¹

²¹For secondary resources on the military history of Missouri in 1861, see Richard S. Brownlee, *Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy: Guerrilla Warfare in the West, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984); Albert E. Castel, *General Sterling Price and the Civil War in the West* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 14–15, 28–29; Snead, *The Fight for Missouri*, 205; Parrish, *A History of Missouri*; Fellman, *Inside War*, 22; Wiley Britton, *The Civil War on the Border* (Dodge City: Kansas Heritage Press, 1990).

Figure 4. Major Engagements That Influenced Little Dixie



Source: Created by author. Blank Map Source: <http://www.nationalatlas.gov>. (accessed 05 MAR 2014)

Phase I: Conventional Operations

The bombardment of Fort Sumter, South Carolina on 11 April propelled a political crisis into a military problem. Political posturing by Governor Jackson and Nathaniel Lyon led to militia recruitment, as the Unionist “home guards” and rebel “minute men” armed and prepared for imminent hostilities. The day after Fort Sumter, President Lincoln called for “aggregate total of 75,000 men” nationwide to quell the rebellion. In response, Governor Jackson called this request “illegal, unconstitutional, and revolutionary in its objects, inhuman and diabolical,” and in turn openly declared his contempt for the United States government. Presuming that Unionist sympathies in the state were, indeed, “conditional,” Jackson viewed Fort Sumter as an opportunity to mobilize public support for secession. Lyon, on the other hand, allied with St.

Louis politician and close Lincoln confidant Francis Blair, who convinced President Lincoln on 30 April to authorize 10,000 volunteers “for the protection of the peaceful inhabitants of Missouri” and to “maintain the authority of the United States.” Some of these forces formed to serve the former purpose, and policed local neighborhoods and towns. Other “Home Guard” units performed broader duties under Lyon’s command, including the policing actions at Camp Jackson ten days later. These units formed under the authorization of then Western Department Commander, United States Army Brigadier General William Harney, but were largely the product of Blair and Lyon’s anticipation of potential rebellion.²²

The day after the Camp Jackson “massacre,” Jackson convinced the state legislature to enact a separate “military bill” that authorized him to form a different state militia, the Missouri State Guard. He then appointed former Governor Sterling Price to command his militia. Jackson’s selection of a fellow Douglas Democrat reflected Price’s statewide popularity, Mexican War experience, and political prominence. For the next month, Missouri remained tense but free of violence, as Harney agreed in principle with now Major General Price to “suppress all unlawful proceedings, which can only disturb the public peace.” However, Lyon and Blair rejected this “Price-Harney Agreement.” Unbeknownst to Harney, they convinced President Lincoln that the agreement threatened the peace of the state as secessionists now had opportunity to mobilize support. Lincoln also authorized Blair to relieve Harney from command if the Congressman’s judgment deemed it “indispensable to do so.” Given this wide latitude from the President, Blair judged quickly. Blair knew that Jackson would take advantage of Harney’s naïve approach to build the State Guard to counter Lyon. Thus, on 30 May, Blair relieved Harney, and the War Department promptly promoted Lyon to Brigadier General and named him to replace Harney as commander of the Western Department. A week later, Lyon, Blair, and Blair’s

²²*O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 375, 603; Phillips, “Calculated Confederate: Claiborne Fox Jackson and the Strategy for Secession in Missouri”; Snead, *The Fight for Missouri*, 150.

secretary met with Jackson, Price, and the Governor's aide, Thomas Snead, in St. Louis to discuss terms for maintaining order. However, sensing Governor Jackson's self-serving intentions, Lyon interrupted the meeting, stating that he would rather see "every man, woman, and child in the State, dead and buried" than to "concede to the State of Missouri for one single instant the right to dictate to my Government." Then, according to Snead, he curtly concluded, "This means war. In an hour one of my officers will call for you and conduct you out of my lines." With that, Nathaniel Lyon preemptively declared war on a state that had never formally seceded. Nonetheless, Lyon's actions, although extralegal, seized the military initiative and ensured that Federal forces would maintain control of Missouri for the foreseeable future. Clearly, Brigadier General Lyon understood Lincoln's political intent.²³

Now accused of treason by the Federal government, Governor Jackson immediately summoned the General Assembly in Jefferson City to another hasty session and attempted to gain proper authority to secede. He was, again, a step behind; Lyon had already gathered his Home Guards and chased the governor to Jefferson City. Pro-secession legislators fled the capital and reassembled in Boonville, a Little Dixie city in Saline County that Jackson believed sympathized with the Confederacy. The next day, Jackson issued a proclamation requesting 50,000 volunteers. John Bullock Clark, a Little Dixie Whig from Howard County, assembled a small force in Boonville to block Lyon's advance. Leaving Clark's small force there, Price continued to

²³*O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 375, 603; Phillips, "Calculated Confederate: Claiborne Fox Jackson and the Strategy for Secession in Missouri"; Snead, *The Fight for Missouri*, 150, 199–200; *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), vols. 4: 331–342, 372–372; Buel Leopard and Floyd C. Shoemaker, eds., *The Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of the State of Missouri Compiled and Edited by and Floyd C. Shoemaker, A.M., Secretary of State Historical Society of Missouri...*, vol. 3 (Columbia, Missouri: The State Historical Society of Missouri, 1922), 402, (accessed November 24, 2013); *Organization and Status of Missouri Troops, Union and Confederate, in Service during the Civil War*. (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 146–147; Buel Leopard, and Floyd C. Shoemaker, eds. *The Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of the State of Missouri*, State Historical Society of Missouri, 1922, 326–342.

assemble volunteers and moved further west to Lexington. However, Clark's untrained and ill-equipped volunteers at Boonville fell quickly to Lyon's superior force on 15 June, so Price moved south organize and train his makeshift force.²⁴

Price retreated from Lexington to Cowskin Prairie, near present day Springfield, which allowed him to begin training his inexperienced volunteers. Many of these men owned no personal weapons, and joined Price completely unprepared for a sustained military campaign. By late July, the State Guard grew to approximately 5,000 men; Price trained the State Guard in basic military drill, which fostered some cohesion at the company level. Fortunately, for Price, Lyon briefly slowed his movement to consolidate and resupply his own troops on the Missouri River, which gave Price this much-needed time. Simultaneously, Confederate Brigadier General Ben McCullough moved his 6,800-man force from northern Arkansas into Missouri to assist Price. Still, the Confederate government approached the Missouri situation with great caution. Price misconstrued this movement as Confederate support for the defense of Missouri, but McCullough's orders from Richmond restricted his actions to the defense of Arkansas. This meant that he was not to wage an offensive campaign in Missouri. "The position of Missouri as a Southern State still in the Union" required McCullough to use "much prudence and circumspection" in the state. By restricting McCullough to enter Missouri only "when necessity and propriety unite that active and direct assistance should be afforded by crossing the boundary and entering the State," McCullough committed only to limited operations in southern Missouri. As such, McCullough acted within the limits established by the Confederate government, much to the dismay of Jackson, Price, and state secessionist leadership.²⁵

On 10 August 1861, the largest single battle on Missouri soil occurred southwest of Springfield along Wilson's Creek. Lyon moved south from the Missouri River and joined

²⁴*O.R.*, ser. 1, 53: 696–98; Snead, *The Fight for Missouri*, 206–10.

²⁵Snead, *The Fight for Missouri*, 239–243; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 98–99.

German-born Brigadier General Franz Sigel's 4,800 Home Guards to strike the rebel force in southern Missouri. He attempted to surprise Price and McCullough's encamped soldiers, but the southerners regrouped quickly and established strong defensive positions on Oak Hill, later nicknamed "Blood Hill." Price's Missourians and McCullough's mixture of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas troops continually thwarted Union assaults and inflicted 1,200 casualties, including Lyon himself. Lyon's death and this unexpected resistance prompted Sigel, now in command, to retreat north having lost nearly a quarter of his original force. McCullough and Price did not pursue the German, choosing instead to rest their weary soldiers following this baptism by fire. Still, Lyon's tactical carelessness, once again, led to strategic advantages for the Union army. Lyon's quick attack exposed an incongruence between Price and McCullough that reflected in their conflicting post-battle reports. Further, Price cared only about Missouri, and needed to capitalize on the tactical victory to gain the momentum needed to re-establish a foothold on the Missouri River. McCullough, on the other hand, questioned Missouri's military value, and then publically belittled Price over a myriad of misgivings about the State Guard's conduct. His grievances included refusals by many State Guardsmen to follow his orders, their failure to return borrowed muskets, and Price's over-embellishment of the State Guard's achievements. McCullough issued a proclamation on 15 August to Missourians that he had "driven the enemy from among you" and that "the time has now arrived for the people of the State to act; you cannot longer procrastinate. Missouri must now take her position, be it north or south." With that, McCullough stayed in Arkansas, and Price now had to deliver Missouri to the Confederacy without assistance from the Confederate Army. The only coordinated rebel effort between the Missouri militia and the Confederate army ended with military leaders amplifying a rift between the Confederate government and Missouri secessionists.²⁶

²⁶Adamson, *Rebellion in Missouri*, 212; Castel, *Sterling Price*, 46–47; *O.R.* ser. 1, 3:109,

While Sigel's defeated soldiers withdrew to central Missouri after Wilson's Creek, approximately ten thousand Union militiamen assembled in Jefferson City, where a newly established provisional government under Hamilton Gamble had replaced the deposed Jackson government on 29 July. John C. Frémont had assumed command of the Western Department that same week, shortly before Lyon had departed for Springfield. Through August, Frémont distributed forces on the Missouri River in Warrensburg and Lexington to reinforce the newly formed Department of Central Missouri, under Brigadier General John Pope, in northern Missouri to protect key railroads from an emerging partisan threat. Price, whose force grew to 20,000 volunteers after the surprising Wilson's Creek success, advanced back north to Lexington, encircled the town, and on 11 September placed the Union garrison there under siege. An Illinois brigade, nicknamed the "Irish Brigade" and commanded by Colonel James Mulligan, defended the city with 3,700 troops. Frémont sent no troops to relieve the beleaguered garrison during the siege. Instead, he chose to keep a large force in Jefferson City and dispatched troops to southeast Missouri to protect the Mississippi River. In the meantime, the State Guard force infiltrated the garrison, using a smoky shield of burning hemp bales, and forced Mulligan's surrender on 20 September. However, this tactical victory produced only a short-term strategic advantage. On 28 September, Frémont finally advanced west against Lexington in conjunction with Kansas militia now moving eastward from Fort Leavenworth. Price determined that defending Lexington from this pincer movement was not worth the risk of losing in battle, and again retreated southward. With his departure, Union forces controlled the Missouri River for the rest of the war.²⁷

Frémont, always cautious when faced with a military dilemma, opted not to pursue Price

143–50; Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 447–48.

²⁷*Journal and Proceedings, 1861*, 131–32; Britton, *Civil War*, 133–36; William Winter, "'Amidst Trials and Troubles': Captain Samuel Churchill Clark, C.S.A.," *Missouri Historical Review* 92, no. 1 (October 1997): 1–17; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 3:185–93; "Colonel Mulligan," *Harpers Weekly*, 19 October 1861, 48.

right away, so the State Guard settled in Springfield. Many Guardsmen, who had rallied to repel the “armed bands of lawless invaders”, lacked the necessary supplies to sustain themselves through the brutal Missouri winter. With their six-month commitment winding down, many of these volunteers requested to return home to gather clothes, materials, and weapons. Without Confederate military support, Price understood that he had to build a *sustainable* militia force from *within* Missouri. Therefore, on 28 November, Price issued a call for 50,000 additional volunteers, just as Governor Jackson had in May. Simultaneously, he released thousands of veterans to return to their homes, gather materials, and recruit locally for the State Guard. However, Price’s vision of a great insurrection in Missouri never materialized. In December, President Davis used the recognition of Missouri as the twelfth Confederate state to summon Price to the Confederate Army. Price initially resisted, preferring to stay in his home state, but after Union forces drove Price out of Missouri in early February, he acquiesced to Davis’s call. However, only 4,000 former State Guardsmen accompanied him east, leaving over 10,000 experienced fighters behind, fueling the resistance to the tightening Union occupation.²⁸

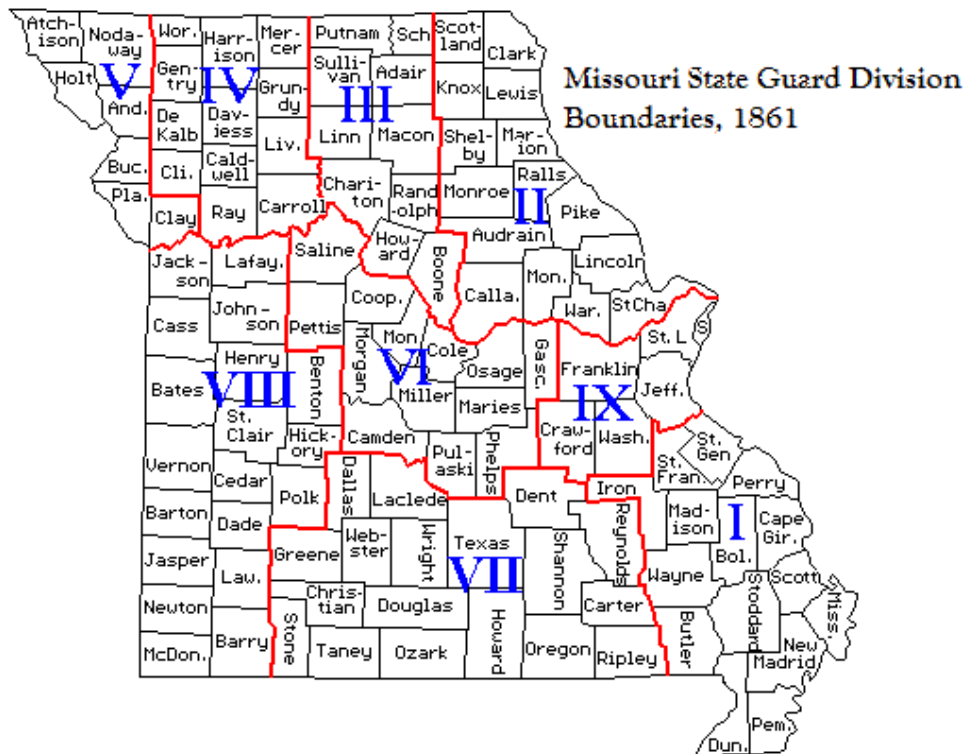
Little Dixie and the Missouri State Guard

Many of the guerrillas who terrorized Little Dixie after 1861 were veterans of the Missouri State Guard. Their activities varied from region to region and shaped the local character of guerrilla fighting in 1862. When the Missouri legislature enacted the Military Bill and authorized Governor Jackson to build this militia force, he and Price organized the State Guard into nine military divisions that roughly aligned with state legislative districts. The bill authorized one brigadier general to command each division. As was custom practice in nineteenth century militias, these officers carried considerable autonomy to recruit and organize within their districts. Those who volunteered for the State Guard originated from a wide variety of social backgrounds,

²⁸Peckham, *Nathaniel Lyon*, 251.

but mainly consisted of young men with little to no military experience. To serve its purpose to “protect the state,” these divisions had to congeal quickly into a cohesive entity, as they opposed a larger, more organized, and slightly better trained force. The volunteers who enrolled in the State Guard experienced combat quickly, and for months served as the sole military arm of the Missouri secessionist movement and state’s Confederate government-in-exile.²⁹

Figure 5. Missouri State Guard Divisions



Source: <http://missouridivision-scv.org/msgdiv.gif> (accessed 28 November 2013).

Little Dixie counties contributed to the State Guard in the Second, Third, and Sixth

²⁹Castel, *Sterling Price*, 14–15; Mark W. Geiger, “Indebtedness and the Origins of Guerrilla Violence in Civil War Missouri,” *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 1 (2009): 49; Snead, *The Fight for Missouri*, 177–93.

Divisions. Each division differed in structure, training, and resources, which contributed to the regional variance of the guerrilla war in later years. The Second Division originated in northeast Missouri and included five Little Dixie counties. This district contained most of the state's railroads, which were both a lifeline for Union troops and hence a target of opportunity for rebel guerrillas. Thomas Randolph, a Virginia native, West Point graduate and veteran of both the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, served as the Division's first commander. This division included several regimental sized units, including six cavalry regiments, which far more organized cavalry than any other division. This structure aligned with how Confederates approached recruiting for the Confederacy in 1862 with large, cavalry based formations under former State Guard officers. The northwestern portion of Little Dixie supported the State Guard's Third Division, and included Chariton, Randolph, Howard, and Boone counties. As the epicenter of hemp production, these counties held great economic importance to the state. Militarily, however, the many Missouri River crossing sites made this area tactically essential for both forces. The division consisted of only two cavalry regiments, but contained a myriad of independent infantry companies. Third Division's original commander, John Bullock Clark, vacated command after he was wounded at Wilson's Creek, and later became a Confederate representative. These volunteers fought with Price in every significant engagement in 1861, and this experience supplemented the more decentralized command structure. In turn, this later translated into smaller, more independent guerrilla bands in 1862, which joined and departed larger groups as they saw fit. South of the Missouri River, Cooper and Saline counties supported the Guard's Sixth Division. Initially commanded by 1860 States Rights lieutenant governor candidate Mosby Monroe Parsons, this division joined Price at Cowskin Prairie and remained with him through the Lexington siege. Because of the heavy union occupation in Saline and Cooper Counties and the county's position south of the Missouri River, many Sixth Division veterans joined Price and served in Confederate Brigades after 1862. As such, relatively few guerrilla incidents occurred in

this locale.³⁰

Phase II: Union Occupation

Unlike the relatively simple structure of the Missouri State Guard, the Union forces that occupied Missouri in 1861 varied in backgrounds, structures, training, purpose, and leadership. First, after President Lincoln supported Lyon's request for additional troops in June, militia units from Kansas, Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana formed and converged onto the state throughout the summer. Initially, Lyon relied on local militias like the Home Guards to conduct operations, but by July, most Union forces in the state comprised of non-Missourians. Many of these units, like the Illinois 16th Volunteer Infantry Regiment, remained in Missouri through 1862. Second, Governor Gamble created three separate indigenous militias during the first year of the war that further complicates characterization of the Union occupation. He authorized a "Six Month Militia" on 24 August 1861, to "protect the lives and property of the citizens of the State." This force consisted mainly of men from the state's interior, including Little Dixie, and according to the state Attorney General, most never fulfilled their six-month duty. In November, Gamble formed the Missouri State Militia (MSM), which grew to over 10,000 volunteers and had assumed most pacification and counter-guerrilla duties in the state by late 1862. The MSM served two purposes. First, Gamble wanted Missouri militias consolidated at the state level, so the MSM constituted a single force to repel "the invasion of the State and suppressing rebellion therein." Second, Gamble and Major General Henry Halleck, then Western Department Commander, attempted to assimilate

³⁰Richard C. Peterson et al., *Sterling Price's Lieutenants: A Guide to the Officers and Organization of the Missouri State Guard, 1861-1865* (Shawnee Mission, KS: Two Trails Pub, 1995), 87–136, 172–185; Joseph A. Mudd, *With Porter in North Missouri: A Chapter in the History of the War between the States* (Iowa City: Camp Pope Bookshop, 1992); *O.R.*, ser. 2, 1: 410; Arthur Roy Kirkpatrick, "Missouri on the Eve of the Civil War," *Missouri Historical Review* 55, no. 2 (January 1961): 99–109, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/ref/collection/mhr/id/36262> (accessed 15 November 2013).

Missouri forces into a united Federal effort. Doing so moved the financial burden of the MSM from the state to the federal government, as President Lincoln agreed to pay for the Militia “on the same footing with the United States Volunteers.” Later in the war, Gamble sanctioned yet another state militia, the Enrolled Missouri Militia (EMM), specially designed as a reserve counter-guerrilla force. Created through General Orders No. 19 on 22 July 1862, Gamble and Brigadier General John Schofield required compulsory enrollment for every able bodied man in the state. Around this same time, the United States War Department removed many out-of-state units from Missouri for service in Kentucky and Tennessee. By 1863, the only states with significant contributions to the Missouri war came from Wisconsin, Arkansas, and Colorado.³¹

Early Union occupation centered on the Missouri River. Union control of this central artery created a clear boundary between Union occupation forces to the north and Price’s State Guard in the south. In turn, this generated a cauldron for guerrilla warfare to thrive in northern Missouri, as Union occupation denied many secessionists the opportunity to join Price in the south. The individual units that occupied these garrisons from Kansas, Illinois, and Iowa set the tone for the Union occupation. Frémont, after assuming command of the Western Department on 27 July, demonstrated considerable restraint by withholding 5,000 soldiers to protect lines of

³¹Daniel E. Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 61; James A. Hamilton, “The Enrolled Missouri Militia: Its Creation and Controversial History,” *Missouri Historical Review* 69, no. 4 (July 1975): 413–32; James O. Broadhead, Lieutenant Colonel, 3rd Cavalry, Missouri State Militia (US), “Early Events of the War in Missouri,” in *War Papers and Personal Reminiscences, 1861-1866: Read before the Commandery of the State of Missouri, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*, (St. Louis: Beckett, 1892), 1–28; Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion: Compiled and Arranged from Official Records of the Federal and Confederate Armies*, (New York: National Historical Society, 1979), 117, 140–41, 798–804; George R. Smith, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Missouri*, Annual Report (Jefferson City: Headquarters, State of Missouri Adjutant General's Office, 1863), 8–9, 11, <http://digital.library.umsystem.edu/> (accessed 6 February 2014); *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 3: 15–17; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 8: 378; *ibid.*, ser. 1, 13: 506.

communication in northern Missouri, although he faced great criticism for his failure to relieve Mulligans beleaguered force at Lexington. This restraint also contributed to his relief from command, as Frank Blair, meddling in military affairs as usual, urged Frémont to reinforce Lyon in the south and expel Price's State Guard. However, by saturating northern Missouri, Frémont maintained control of the Missouri River, isolated Price from his recruiting base, and reinforced conditions for long-term success. However, despite strategic success, the combination of inconsistent Union policies and irresponsible tactical actions by Union soldiers added to the conflict's escalation.³²

From July 1861 to July 1862, official Union policies fluctuated between a conciliatory approach aimed at pacifying the neutral populace to what historian Mark Grimsley calls "hard war" and describes as "the erosions of the enemy's will to resist by deliberately or concomitantly subjecting the civilian population to the pressures of war." Brigadier General John Pope, Commander of the Department of Northern Missouri, provided the groundwork for this Union occupation policy in Little Dixie in July 1861. A Mexican War veteran, Pope had experienced guerrilla warfare previously. His actions emulated Winfield Scott, whose Orders No. 20 became his unwritten standard for pacification practices. A precursor to today's "hearts and minds" philosophy, Scott balanced respect for civilian civil liberties with punitive measures against guerrillas. In effect, Scott attempted to turn the population, whose understanding of the local area surpassed any occupying army's, against irregulars. Thus, when guerrillas damaged the Palmyra to Saint Joseph Railroad on 26 July, Pope turned to the local population to fix the problem. Pope proclaimed to Palmyra residents that "they will be held accountable for the destruction of any bridges, culverts, or portions of the railroad track within five miles on each side of them." Failure to turn culprits in with "conclusive proof" meant that residents would pay an assessment up to

³²Britton, *Civil War*, 41.

\$10,000. This, Pope believed, provided a “strong inducement” for the people within his district to rid *themselves* of a guerrilla minority, while minimizing resource requirements for himself. Further, Pope believed that once the guerrilla sanctuary dissipated locally, guerrillas would no longer operate in this locale and success would then spread across larger areas. For a brief period, this tactic worked. In the end, however, the punitive nature of the program produced an unforeseen effect: instead of isolating insurgents from the populace, the policies reinforced and expanded support for the guerrillas.³³

Pope believed that his policies fell squarely within acceptable limits, based on the principle that a guerilla minority existed only because the citizens allowed it to function. Frémont followed his subordinate’s lead; he responded to guerrilla provocation by enacting punitive measures against the local population. Unlike Pope, however, Frémont saw the problem because of Missouri’s system of law and order. At Governor Gamble’s insistence, Frémont declared martial law in Missouri on 30 August. Noting the inability of state officials to impose order, he described the state’s legal systems as:

“Its disorganized condition, the helplessness of the civil authority, the total insecurity of life, amid the devastation of property by bands of murderers and marauders, who infest nearly every county of the State, and avail themselves of the public misfortunes and the vicinity of a hostile force to gratify private and neighborhood vengeance, and who find an enemy wherever they find plunder, finally demand the severest measures to repress the daily crimes and outrages which are driving off the inhabitants and ruining the State. In this condition the public safety and the success of our arms require unity of purpose, without let or hindrance to the prompt administration of affairs.”³⁴

Frémont also required that all citizens found guilty of taking arms against the government would face execution and have all property confiscated, *including slaves*. Thus,

³³Grimsley, *Hard Hand of War*, 5; Timothy D. Johnson, *A Gallant Little Army: The Mexico City Campaign* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007); *O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 403–04; John Pope, *The Military Memoirs of General John Pope*, ed. Peter Cozzens, and Robert I. Girardi (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 21–29.

³⁴*O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 466–67.

Frémont's decree far surpassed Pope's policy, but it also informed President Lincoln and the War Department to the mounting problems in Missouri. Unfortunately, for Frémont, it also informed the President of the tactless policies enacted under Frémont's hand. Lincoln promptly reminded the Pathfinder that the fragile political situation in the Border States created "great danger" in the mere mention of emancipation, and then ordered Frémont to "modify" this clause. He further told Frémont that to "shoot a man" would likely bring rebel reprisals, so all shootings from that point forward required Presidential approval.³⁵

Ever the politician, the President's brisk reply did not dissuade the self-confident Frémont. Frémont protested the order, and even sent his wife, Jessie, on an envoy to Washington to persuade Lincoln to rescind the order. However, Mrs. Frémont failed to do so and Lincoln publically denounced Frémont's emancipation clause. The pathfinder then resorted to other measures to establish order, such as censoring all newspapers in Missouri that criticized the occupation. These acts accomplished little toward thwarting the growing guerrilla threat. Instead, they only alienated the common Missourian's highly valued sense of autonomy and independence. Considering that Missouri never voted for secession, Missourians in 1861 viewed these measures as unnecessary and extreme. Still, two years later, Frémont's policies might have worked as intended. In 1861, however, Frémont only incited passion among Missouri inhabitants and instigated the conflict. When Lincoln finally relieved Frémont in October, the pathfinder left Missouri in administrative turmoil. Needing an administrator and organizer, Lincoln turned to Major General Henry Halleck to clean Frémont's mess.³⁶

"A more severe policy" was necessary because guerrillas "forfeited their rights as citizens

³⁵Ibid., ser. 1, vol. 3: 469–470.

³⁶Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 24–25; Brayton Harris, *Blue & Gray in Black & White: Newspapers in the Civil War* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1999); Paul Turkoly-Joscik, "Fremont and the Western Department," *Missouri Historical Review* 82, no. 4 (January 1992): 363–385, <http://statehistoricalsocietyofmissouri.org/cdm/> (accessed 12 November 2012).

by making war against the government.” Such became Major General Henry Halleck’s guiding principle when he inherited the Department of Missouri in November. Halleck’s strong intellect, superb organizational skills, and his strict ideals perhaps made him the ideal candidate for this challenge. With a reputation for brilliant military scholarship, “Old Brains,” Halleck taught tactics at West Point and wrote *Elements on Military Arts and Science* that perhaps was the most widely accepted American study of tactical warfare by Army officers. Like most antebellum West Point officers, he held mechanistic views on warfare, enhanced through extensive study of the Napoleonic Wars. To Halleck, warfare meant armies, decisive battles, maneuver, and rules. In Missouri, he soon found out, rules did not exist. Seeing the failures of the more conciliatory approaches, Halleck both satisfied his desire for structure and his quest to quell the unrest in what Grimsley calls a “pragmatic” approach. In this approach, Halleck desired to minimize the role of the civilian; counter-guerrilla problems were military problems. Like Frémont, Halleck established martial law. However, unlike Frémont’s approach, Halleck viewed martial law through a systematic legal framework, and not as a coercive tool. Thus, his General Orders #1 established clear guidelines proper conduct. If guilty, rebels *not enrolled in the Confederate service* were subject to capital punishment. To Halleck, who previously practiced law in California and helped write the California state constitution, guerilla warfare was not warfare; it was a crime. Halleck extended these guidelines to the Union ranks as well. Guerrilla tactics by Union soldiers, he believed, led to justified civilian grievances. Grievances, in turn, generate reprisals, and reprisals undermined his ability to separate civilians from combatants. Thus, he dealt with Union atrocities with an equally harsh hand. Still, Halleck’s policies had minimal tangible effect overall. The Missouri guerilla war had long surpassed a point where Halleck’s measures could halt its escalation. While he did not accelerate it, he showed that in irregular

warfare, well-intentioned and even well executed policies will nonetheless have unintended consequences.³⁷

While Little Dixie's populace polarized because of the increasingly punitive Union policy, erratic enforcement by Union troops compounded the problem. In many cases, soldiers abused civilians, plundered foodstuffs, defiled local women, and murdered known Confederate sympathizers. While the most egregious acts occurred in western Missouri during the later years of the war, inconsistent policy enforcement statewide amplified local Missouri problems. For example, Pope's policies, while conciliatory in hindsight, forced impositions on Missourians who had voted *against* secession three times. To make matters worse, Pope exercised little order and discipline over his Illinois and Kansas troops. Wiley Britton, who served in Missouri in 1861 with the 7th Kansas Cavalry, recollected, "Drunken and lawless acts of Federal soldiers were believed to have been countenanced from headquarters, instead of being corrected." One Little Dixie Unionist complained to Frémont that units often justified their actions as a retaliatory necessity and a natural response to criminal behavior. The fatigue and frustration experienced by these militiamen confirmed their own degrading views of Missouri "Pukes," or, as historian Michael Fellman describes "dirt-wallowing, elemental brutes, suspended in a comatose state between bouts of primitive violence." Some lower level Union leaders attempted to control their soldiers' improper behavior, while others eventually became so hardened that they, too, accepted these reprisals as a necessary condition in counter-guerrilla warfare.³⁸

Phase III: Guerrilla Warfare in Little Dixie

Guerrilla tactics against both Union occupation troops and loyal Missouri residents

³⁷*O.R.*, ser. 1, 8: 476–78, 409; *ibid.*, ser. 2, 1: 233; Grimsley, *Hard Hand of War*, 49–51; Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 58–65.

³⁸Britton, *Civil War*, 145–46. For detailed description of individual responses to the unique conditions in Missouri, see Fellman, *Inside War*, 148–192.

characterized the third phase of warfare in Little Dixie. Rebel guerrillas increased their operations incrementally through the conventional phase in 1861. In this time, they used covert tactics to surprise vulnerable Union outposts and destroy key bridges and railroads. Yet, these early guerrillas prompted draconian responses in Little Dixie, as the perception of Little Dixie residents created the impetus for reciprocal violence. By September 1861, much of the guerrilla activity in Little Dixie temporarily subsided, as focus shifted toward the conventional fighting south of the Missouri River. However, when Price initiated recruiting efforts to support an internal rebellion, the guerrilla war in north-central Missouri re-emerged on a much wider scale.³⁹

The size of these recruiting expeditions varied in size from small groups of four or five people to entire State Guard companies. Price intended for the recruiting missions to serve a unified purpose: to repulse the Yankee invaders from the state and set the conditions for secession. However, by December many Union units had adjusted to guerrilla methods and stifled these recruiting parties. Three confrontations between rebel recruiters and Union soldiers demonstrated this adaptation. The first incident occurred on 19 December at Blackwater Creek in western Saline County. Here, Brigadier General Pope surrounded, defeated, and captured over 700 recruits from Saline, Chariton, and Howard counties attempting to elude Union patrols. Pope's forces blocked the only viable crossing option on the creek, and then ordered one battalion of the Second Missouri Cavalry (Merrill's Horse) to envelop the recruits. Sensing this trap, the rebel forces opened fire on Merrill's cavalry, but quickly realized that they had no escape. The rebel recruits, many of whom were unarmed, surrendered only thirty minutes into the skirmish. By compelling this sudden capitulation, Pope captured 684 recruits in a stunning event that made national headlines and drew national attention to the irregular war in Missouri. Over the next month, Missouri State Guard Colonel Caleb Dorsey, recruiting for the Second Division, lost over

³⁹*O.R.*, ser. 1, 3:156–65; Castel, *Sterling Price*, 62; Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 18–25.

150 rebel recruits in two separate incidents. First, Brigadier General Benjamin Prentiss used intelligence that he gained from local Unionist civilians and overwhelmed a recruiting expedition at Mount Zion Church in Boone County. Here, Prentiss's force killed twenty-five guerrillas and captured another sixty. Second, forces from the First and Second Missouri Cavalry surprised and routed a cluster of recruits at Roan's Tanyard near Boonville. In this incident, the MSM forces killed approximately forty recruits, took twenty-four prisoners, and captured crucial supplies including horses and weapons. Cumulatively, Union militias had crippled Price's recruiting endeavor in the months following his greatest tactical successes at Wilson's Creek and Lexington. Select units, like Lewis Merrill's Second Missouri Cavalry, succeeded because they learned the importance of continual reconnaissance to gather relevant intelligence. They leveraged Unionist civilians to enhance this reconnaissance. This information supplemented their familiarization of Missouri terrain and enabled them to interdict the relatively lightly armed recruiting parties. This counter-guerrilla success created a lull in the guerrilla activity and allowed Union leadership to attend to hostilities elsewhere in the state during this first winter of the war.⁴⁰

Despite considerable success during the winter, the Union Army's counter-guerrilla feats did not completely halt rebel recruiting practices. Sporadic skirmishing continued in the spring as many former State Guardsmen who never reunited with Price resorted to local guerrilla activities similar to those during the previous summer. Supplemented by Halleck's punitive measures, Union patrols halted large scale recruiting practices and left the Missouri State Guard as an ineffective militia force isolated from its recruiting base. Ironically, Sterling Price also reinforced the failure of his own initiative when he accepted President Davis's offer to serve in Confederate army *away* from Missouri. On 8 April, Price commissioned as a Major General in the

⁴⁰Leslie Anders, "The Blackwater Incident," *Missouri Historical Review* 88, no. 4 (July 1994): 416–29; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 8:44–51, 730; Brownlee, *Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 22–31; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 3: 695; Peterson et al., *Sterling Price's Lieutenants*, 13.

Confederate Army, still believing that he would return to Missouri to conquer the “insolent and barbarous hordes” that had overrun his state. He left Missouri and traveled eastward with two newly formed Missouri brigades, and did not return to Missouri until 1864. By this time, secessionists felt little excitement to serve the Confederacy away from home. Yet, after his departure, another escalation of violence occurred in Little Dixie, this time due directly to Confederate government policy.⁴¹

On 21 April 1862, the Confederate Congress passed the Partisan Ranger Act. Davis had acquiesced to pressures from newspaper editors and Confederate legislators to integrate partisan units into the Confederate strategy in response to Union occupation in the upper south. However, Davis’s vision of “partisan rangers” did not reflect the character of the typical Missouri guerrilla. Similar to Halleck, Davis’s regular army background, Mexican War experience, and tenure as the U.S. Secretary of War, influenced his perspective on the rules of warfare. Davis envisioned partisans in terms of cavalry raids and general harassment in support of and subordinate to a primary Confederate strategy. However, the vaguely worded Partisan Ranger Act left “partisan warfare” open, in many respects, to interpretation by field commanders. Further, the act coincided with the enactment of Confederate conscription laws, which further confounded the interpretation of Davis’s aims. In effect, the laws counteracted each other. The Partisan Ranger Act presented potential Confederate conscripts an option for avoiding the regimen of army life, yet still allowed them to fight Yankees close to home. Likewise, these acts provided hope for Governor Reynolds in Missouri that the Confederate government might attempt to integrate Missouri into the larger Confederate effort, since Missouri was especially suited for guerrilla warfare. However, this fusion never materialized. Instead, the Partisan Ranger Act

⁴¹*O.R.*, ser. 1, 8: 813–14; Ephraim McDowell Anderson, *Memoirs, Historical and Personal, Including the Campaigns of the First Missouri Confederate Brigade* (St. Louis: Times Print Company Street, 1868).

became justification for Missourians to ignore the Conscription Act altogether, and indirectly lead to Missouri's further isolation from the larger war.⁴²

To compound this chasm, leaders in the Trans-Mississippi Theater interpreted the legislation out of Richmond much differently than Davis had intended. Confederate Major General Thomas C. Hindman, an Arkansas lawyer, assumed command of the Trans-Mississippi District on 31 May 1862. Hindman embraced guerrilla warfare and saw it as a tactical necessity to counter Union activity in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Hindman's Orders # 17, issued June 17, 1862, defined the parameters of guerrilla warfare and included provisions that allowed groups to self-organize with ten or more men for the "effectual annoyance of the enemy." Guerrillas under Hindman's command achieved some local success, as many Missourians and Arkansans naturally embraced Hindman's endorsement of guerrilla practices. However, this also deepened the divide between Jefferson Davis and his westernmost states. Whereas, as historian Daniel Sutherland notes, the Partisan Ranger Act was an attempt by President Davis to regulate irregular war, Hindman applied few controls over guerrilla warfare in his district. In Missouri, Hindman's orders and relaxed control compounded the violent conditions in the state. Orders #17 provided the justification from which rebel guerrilla leaders could operate, and in doing so, these men generated the third and most destructive phase of Little Dixie's guerrilla war.⁴³

⁴²Confederate States of America, *Military Laws of the Confederate States : Embracing All the Legislation of Congress Appertaining to Military Affairs from the First to the Last Session Inclusive, with a Copious Index (1863)* (Richmond: J.W. Randolph, 1863), 65, <https://ia700507.us.archive.org/20/items/militarylawsofco00conf/militarylawsofco00conf.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2013); see Paul Ashdown and Edward Caudill, *The Mosby Myth: A Confederate Hero in Life and Legend*, vol. 4 (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2002) and Albert B. Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (New York: Hillary House, 1963); Fellman, *Inside War*, 97–103; Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 26–28; see John W. Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).

⁴³*O.R.*, ser. 1, 13: 835; Brownlee, *Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 76–78; Diane Neal and Thomas W. Kremm, *Lion of the South: General Thomas C. Hindman* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1993), 127–128; *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist*, 5: 373–74; Sutherland, *A*

This final escalation manifested in Little Dixie from May to September 1862. Hindman directed parties north to Missouri with the dual purpose: to recruit for the Confederate Army and to drive Union forces from Missouri. Of the recruiters in Little Dixie, two Kentucky-born colonels in the Confederate Army, Joseph Chrisman Porter and John Poindexter, became the most notable. Operating from the Missouri River to the Iowa border, they entered Little Dixie with the dual intent of inciting fervor toward the Confederate cause and defeating the Union occupation. Toward these ends, they used the schism within the Missouri populace to their advantage. Their presence attracted volunteers who may have sympathized with the Confederacy at the beginning of the war, but now held very personal bitterness toward Union soldiers *because of* the war. The two men traversed Little Dixie, attacking vulnerable targets, stockpiling supplies, and generating fear among local Unionists. In doing so, they exploited civil unrest by waging partisan war on a larger scale: a combination of guerrilla and cavalry tactics that produced a psychological advantage over both the occupiers and the local populace. Both men commanded cavalry units in the Missouri State Guard, and now led forces that fluctuated between 200 and 1000 men, as smaller, local guerrilla groups— many of which formed from independent State Guard companies, joined and departed as they saw fit. They used this combination of strength and mobility to overwhelm susceptible Union forces and raid Unionists strongholds. In one such case, Porter raided Memphis, a small town north of Little Dixie, gathered all Unionist sympathizers, held them captive, looted the town, released the detainees, and then left in a matter of hours. Here, his men stole eighty-two muskets and several Union uniforms, donning their new acquisitions as they rode out of town. The incident agitated the Union regional commander, Brigadier General John McNeil, who ordered all troops in northeast Missouri to pursue the rebel menace. In this pursuit, a portion of McNeil's cavalry happened upon Porter's rear guard, but Porter sensed the pursuit,

Savage Conflict, 68–70.

stopped, and baited the Federals into an ambush, producing over eighty casualties. Antics like this added to Porter and Poindexter's aura and to the appeal of guerrilla warfare. This, in turn, attracted recruits, kept them armed, tormented Unionists, and frustrated Union soldiers.⁴⁴

In late July, two events reversed Porter and Poindexter's psychological hold over Little Dixie. First, their initial success in northern Missouri prompted the new Department of Missouri commander, Brigadier General John Schofield, to retaliate with even greater vigor. He and Governor Gamble enacted General Orders #19, which forced all men of military age to register for Governor Gamble's Enrolled Missouri Militia (EMM). Polarizing the population was once a consequence of the guerrilla war, but had now become official policy. Porter and his contemporaries acted under Confederate authority, which allowed Schofield and Gamble to enforce allegiance oaths; they could now rationalize that any eligible man not enrolled in the EMM supported the rebellion. Second, Odon Guitar, a University of Missouri lawyer and commander of the Ninth MSM Cavalry, outwitted both men in Little Dixie. After seasoned counter-guerrillas from the Third Iowa Cavalry fought Porter's rebels in Monroe County for two days, Porter disengaged and attempted to withdraw and in rural Boone County. However, with intelligence that he gained from this prolonged engagement, Guitar employed skirmishers to maintain contact with Porter's force of approximately 250 irregulars. He then gathered over 500 militiamen from various infantry, cavalry, and artillery militia companies, and departed from Columbia to confront Porter. At the Battle of Moore's Mill, Guitar overwhelmed Porter's force, as rebel losses totaled fifty-two killed and over 150 wounded. The Union victory not only stopped Porter's momentum, but shattered Porter's aura. Guitar repeated this success the following month, when he pursued and defeated Poindexter's force in eastern Chariton County. By removing these two Confederate commanders from the battlefield, the guerrilla war in Little

⁴⁴Peterson et al., *Sterling Price's Lieutenants*, 111; Mudd, *With Porter in North Missouri*, 53–75; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 13:146–47.

Dixie protracted and spread into local criminality. Porter continued his mission, but never regained any semblance of the power he held over Little Dixie the previous summer. He died in early 1863 from wounds suffered from a small skirmish north of Springfield. His compatriot Poindexter, captured by Guitar in Chariton County, was paroled by a military commission and hid in Randolph County from both rebels and Unionists until 1864, when he became a Union informant.⁴⁵

With the demise of Porter and Poindexter, so came the end of any realistic chance of Missouri secession. Conditions in the state continued to deteriorate, however, as indiscriminate guerrilla violence escalated. Neighborly suspicions, harsh Union policies, guerrilla reprisals, and war weariness contributed to these dismal statewide conditions from 1862 to 1865. For the Confederate state government, faulty assumptions drove actions prompted counteraction either by local citizens or by Union militia. The exiled state government exacerbated the problem in 1863 and 1864 by attempting “raids” to liberate the state under an illusion that Missouri would still secede. The worst violence occurred west of Little Dixie on the Kansas border, where outlaws like “Bloody” Bill Anderson and William Clarke Quantrill exploited residual post-Border War tensions for personal benefit. Union forces operating in western Missouri applied harsh counter-guerrilla measures, including complete evacuation of several counties on the Kansas border. Yet, guerrilla violence extended past Little Dixie and the western border; this same cycle of violence engulfed the entire state. This suggests that firebrands at the state level, like Jackson and Lyon, bore the greatest responsibility for creating these conditions. While local guerrillas and Union soldiers escalated the conflict, actions by state and national political leaders at the onset of the war generated the internal resentment that polarized the populace. The United States government held a better understanding of Missouri’s environment and adapted better to the changing

⁴⁵*O.R.*, ser. 1, 34: 397; Brownlee, *Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 79–89; Mudd, *With Porter in North Missouri*; *O.R.*, ser. 1, 13:182–87.

conditions at the tactical, operational, and political levels. This understanding and adaptation aided the Union strategically in Missouri, despite the harsh and unnecessary measures at Union hands. John Pope, although he denied his role as one of the primary instigators of these conditions, opined that:

“Missouri suffered more during the late war than any state except perhaps Virginia. It is also my opinion that the larger part of this suffering was unnecessary and was brought about by unwise and inconsiderate action, mainly on the part of the sympathizers with the south.”⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

The social, military, and political factors that led to the catastrophe in Missouri originated in how national and state leaders understood Missouri prior to the war. The people of Missouri were frontiersmen, with an evolving character driven by economic opportunity. Indicators of this nascent culture emerged by 1861, but the historical image of Missouri as a slave state with border ruffians willing to defend the slavery institution blinded most actors to these emerging changes. These faulty assumptions informed how the Civil War in Missouri evolved over time and intensified in scope. For military professionals, Missouri offers rich context into forming a better, practical understanding of irregular warfare. First, as military means serve political aims, Missouri secessionists and the Confederate government demonstrates how failure to align these aims and means builds conditions that satisfy neither. Confederate military success garnered almost no strategic gain. Lincoln countered the Confederate performance by establishing clearer political aims and ensuring the military means progressed toward this intent. Thus, tactically, Union policy achieved very limited success, strategically; the state never came close to falling out of Union control. In fact, the state became a great strategic resource by the end of the war, as it supplied ample personnel and equipment toward the Federal war effort.

Politically and militarily, the Confederate government neglected Missouri’s secessionist

⁴⁶Pope, *The Military Memoirs of General John Pope*, 15.

movement, which exacerbated internal struggles in the state. Jefferson Davis's nominal recognition of the secessionist government-in-exile disillusioned many would-be Confederates, who felt abandoned by the Confederate government's lack of military support. Further, Davis publically sanctioned partisan warfare, but provided few resources to manage it. Increased tensions between Union forces and Confederate guerrillas in Missouri and protracted the conflict. Although Trans-Mississippi Confederate leaders understood the benefits of partisan warfare, incongruence between this department and the Confederate government allowed Union forces maintain control of the state. This isolated Missouri from the national-level Confederate struggle and created a completely separate conflict; a conflict that intensified and protracted in a distinctly different manner than the Civil War at large.

For the Union, Missouri became a laboratory for trial and error, in terms of both pacification policies and counter-guerrilla tactics. Two points highlight the experience. First, Union military leaders largely understood the President's intent. In cases where they did not, such as Frémont's premature emancipation, Lincoln quickly intervened and made the appropriate course corrections. These actions aimed at a single goal: preserving Missouri within the United States. Lincoln's deeds backed up his words, and his military leaders secured his objective in the Civil War's first year. Second, military leaders in Little Dixie proved that they could adapt quickly to violent and dynamic surroundings. On one hand, their policies and actions generated unintended consequences. Union tactical action often created greater violence, and well-intentioned conciliatory policies propelled neutral bystanders to join guerrilla bands. Still, when Confederate leaders attempted to coordinate and sponsor guerrilla warfare at the state, theater, and national levels, Union troops in Little Dixie adjusted quickly. Lyon's immediate seizure and subsequent control over the Missouri River created difficulties for pro-Confederate men who wished to join Price in the south. Adapting to the Missouri terrain allowed Union militia leaders like Lewis Merrill to anticipate rebel recruiting movements and halt recruiting expeditions in the

winter. Finally, Odon Guitar demonstrated that recognizing and adapting to changes in tactics, like Porter's expansion to overt methods, creates opportunities for continued tactical advantage.

Historically, Missouri's Civil War directly influenced two enduring legacies that shaped how the United States Army conducts operations today. First, many current laws of war descended from General Orders # 100 and the collective works of Francis Lieber. Lieber, a Columbia University lawyer, assisted General-in-Chief Henry Halleck in categorizing the Confederate guerrilla fighters. Halleck's uneasiness on the issue sprang from a cognitive disconnect between his concept of proper warfare and his experience in Missouri. The "Lieber Code" became the foundation for the American version of the law of war, and much of the same logic and language exists in international laws of warfare today, including the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Further, Lieber and Halleck recognized emerging changes in the character of warfare, including the preponderance of irregular war and the blending of civilians and soldiers on the battlefield. These two trends fell well outside Halleck's vision of proper warfare. He, perhaps more than any other American, inculcated mechanistic, Jominian-style warfare into the American army. The conflict during his Missouri tenure imposed a cognitive challenge on "Old Brains," and he employed Lieber to help him resolve it. Thus, while the first western attempt to codify the laws of warfare remain an important legacy, understanding how Halleck's viewpoint evolved because of his Missouri experience remains an important facet of the Missouri conflict for professional study as well.⁴⁷

Second, many historians note that the Civil War introduced Americans to the concept of

⁴⁷Lieber and Hartigan, *Lieber's Code and the Law of War*, 1–2, 5; Matthew J. Mancini, "Francis Lieber, Slavery, and the 'Genesis' of the Laws of War," *Journal of Southern History* 77, no. 2 (2011): 325; Francis Lieber, *Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), <http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p4013coll11/id/1649> (accessed 10 November 2013).

“total war,” as military historian Edward Hagerman defined as “war waged against the will of the enemy’s population, and against the territory, resources, and communications needed to support the enemy’s army.” Often attributed to William Tecumseh Sherman’s method to subjugate the South in 1864 and 1865, total war implies that a nation uses its military to attack an entire society, not just an opposing military force. Sherman’s concept of total war originated from his Missouri experience, while stationed in St. Louis in 1862. Here, he criticized Halleck’s administration of the war in Missouri, “Yet the country is full of Secessionists, and it takes all of his command to watch them.” He referred to the large number of soldiers needed to suppress Missouri guerillas, and he later questioned the necessity of allocating resources toward this end. This attitude continued to develop after leaving Missouri, as later that year Sherman disputed Halleck’s views further by stating “This is no trifle; when one nation is at war with another, all the people of the one are enemies of the other: then the rules are plain and easy of understanding.” Afterwards, Sherman applied military force at both tangible and intangible elements of southern society, including private property, civilians, and entire communities. In his words, “War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out.” While the experience in Missouri of both Lieber and Sherman shaped two profound legacies, they also produced a notable irony. Halleck and Lieber emplaced measures attempting to *constrain* warfare by applying logical boundaries in *congruence* with societal and military norms, while Sherman *changed* the norms of American warfare by *expanding* acceptable parameters. The Missouri Civil War shaped two very divergent views on war, and in this tension lies the most applicable lesson for military professionals today.⁴⁸

⁴⁸Hagerman, *The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare: Ideas, Organization, and Field Command*, xiii; John B. Walters, “General William T. Sherman and Total War,” *The Journal of Southern History* 14, no. 4 (1948): 447–449; *O.R.*, ser. 3, 3:148–64; Lieber and Hartigan, *Lieber’s Code and the Law of War*, 1–2, 5; *Memoirs of General W.T.*

War is unpredictable, unforeseeable, and unimaginable. Yet, all soldiers who go to war hold preconceived notions on the environment in which they operate, including both the enemy adversary and civilian populace. In Missouri, these notions, at every level, shaped the conflict. For Sherman, Halleck, and countless soldiers on both sides, the war itself challenged their deepest values and conceptions. How leaders and soldiers face these challenges and adapt to the conditions they face will dictate the overall outcome. Carl von Clausewitz illustrates this point by qualifying war in “the province of chance. In no other sphere of human activity must such a margin be left for this intruder. It increases the uncertainty of every circumstance and deranges the course of events.” It is within these margins where some leaders, like Sherman and Halleck, adapted, while other leaders, like Price, did not. One must also note that Sherman and Halleck’s Missouri experience altered their perspectives in radically different ways, yet both adapted in a manner that progressed toward Lincoln’s political goal. Thus, the social, political, and military factors that led to the “maelstrom” in Missouri emanated from individual assumptions before the war. These assumptions, in many cases, were invalid in 1861. However, those individuals that understood political objectives and then used this understanding to adapt to the dynamic, violent conditions, in the end, assured that Missouri remained under the United States flag.⁴⁹

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⁴⁹Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 117; Fellman, *Inside War*, 22.

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